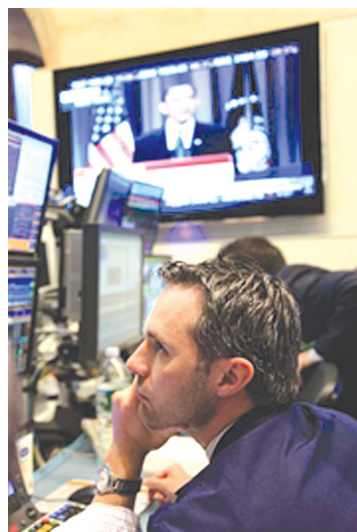


INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

STREET FIGHT



A trader works at the New York Stock Exchange during President Obama's speech, Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Read more on Page A4

SPORTS NEWS

HGH TEST



In this April 12, 2010, file photo, Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig responds to a question during a news conference at Target Field, in Minneapolis. Selig says his science adviser is examining the human growth hormone blood test available through the World Anti-Doping Agency but isn't sure when the studying will completed.

Read more on Page A12



Price of a barrel
of petroleum

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↑ 0.2



This image provided by the U.S. Coast Guard shows fire boat response crews battle the blazing remnants of the off shore oil rig Deepwater Horizon Wednesday April 21, 2010. The Coast Guard by sea and air planned to search overnight for 11 workers missing since a thunderous explosion rocked an oil drilling platform that continued to burn late Wednesday.

Associated Press

Burning oil rig sinks, setting stage for big spill

Read Pag 5

Israel rejects U.S. calls for east Jerusalem freeze

JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's prime minister on Thursday rejected U.S. calls to halt construction in disputed east Jerusalem, clouding a new peace mission by Washington's Mideast envoy. Benjamin Netanyahu's comments were broadcast on Israel's Channel 2 TV shortly after envoy George Mitchell arrived for his first visit in six weeks. Mitchell's efforts had been on hold due to disagreements over east Jerusalem, the section of the holy city claimed by Israel and the Palestinians.

"I am saying one thing. There will be no freeze in Jerusalem," Netanyahu said. "There should be no preconditions to talks."

Continued on Page 7



Construction workers work on a new housing development, as an Israeli flag flies in the foreground, in the Jewish neighborhood of Har Homa, in east Jerusalem, Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Associated Press



President Barack Obama speaks about financial reform at the Great Hall at Cooper Union in New York Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Associated Press

Lawmakers:

Candidates must prove citizenship

JONATHAN J. COOPER

Associated Press Writer

PHOENIX (AP) — Arizona lawmakers expressing doubt over whether President Barack Obama was born in the United States are pushing a bill through the Legislature that would require the president to show his birth certificate to get on the state's 2012 ballot.

Continued on Next Page



Report: Health overhaul will increase nation's tab



Gov. Sean Parnell, right, listens as Alaska Attorney General Dan Sullivan explains on Tuesday, April 20, 2010, in Juneau, Alaska, that Alaska will join a multi-state lawsuit challenging the federal health care reform act President Obama and Congress passed into law last month.

Associated Press

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's health care overhaul law will increase

the nation's health care tab instead of bringing costs down, government economic forecasters concluded Thursday in a sobering assessment of the sweeping

legislation.

A report by economic experts at the Health and Human Services Department said the health care remake will achieve Obama's aim of expanding health insurance — adding 34 million Americans to the coverage rolls.

But the analysis also found that the law falls short of the president's twin goal of controlling runaway costs. It also warned that Medicare cuts may be unrealistic and unsustainable, driving about 15 percent of hospitals into the red and "possibly jeopardizing access" to care for seniors.

The mixed verdict for Obama's signature issue is the first comprehensive look by neutral experts.

In particular, the warnings about Medicare could become a major political liability for Democratic lawmakers in the

midterm elections. Seniors are more likely to vote than younger people and polls show they are already deeply skeptical of the law.

The report from Medicare's Office of the Actuary carried a disclaimer saying it does not represent the official position of the Obama administration. White House officials have repeatedly complained that such analyses have been too pessimistic and lowball the law's potential to achieve savings.

The report acknowledged that some of the cost-control measures in the bill — Medicare cuts, a tax on high-cost insurance and a commission to seek ongoing Medicare savings — could help reduce the rate of cost increases beyond 2020. But it held out little hope for progress in the first decade.

"During 2010-2019, however, these effects would be outweighed by the increased costs associated with the expansions of health insurance coverage," wrote Richard S. Foster, Medicare's chief actuary. "Also, the longer-term viability of the Medicare ... reductions is doubtful." Foster's office is responsible for long-range costs estimates.

Republicans said the findings validate their concerns about Obama's 10-year, nearly \$1 trillion plan to remake the nation's health care system.

"A trillion dollars gets spent, and it's no surprise — health care costs are going to go up," said Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich., a leading Republican on health care issues. Camp added that he's concerned the Medicare cuts will undermine coverage for seniors. □

CITIZENSHIP

Continued from Front Page

The House passed the measure Wednesday on a 31-29 vote, ignoring protests from opponents who said it's casting Arizona in an ugly light and could give the elected secretary of state broad powers to kick a presidential candidate off the ballot.

"We're becoming a national joke," Rep. Chad Campbell, who opposes the measure, said Thursday.

The measure's sponsor, Rep. Judy Burges, said she isn't sure Obama could prove his eligibility for the ballot in Arizona and wants to erase all doubts.

"You have half the population who thinks everything is fine, and you have the other half of the population who has had doubts built up in their mind," Burges said.

So-called "birthers" have contended since the 2008 presidential campaign that Obama is ineligible to be president because, they argue, he was actually born in Kenya, his father's homeland. The Constitution says that a person must be a "natural-born citizen" to be eligible for the presidency.

Hawaii officials have repeatedly confirmed Obama's

citizenship, and his Hawaiian birth certificate has been made public, along with birth notices from two Honolulu newspapers published within days of his birth in August 1961.

Courts have rebuffed lawsuits challenging Obama's eligibility, but the issue hasn't gone away. Lawmakers have introduced similar bills in a handful of other states. They include Oklahoma, where a measure passed the House but failed in the Senate, and Missouri, where a bill was withdrawn before any action was taken.

Eleven U.S. House Republicans have signed on to a federal bill, but it hasn't received a hearing in the Democrat-controlled House.

Arizona's measure would require U.S. presidential candidates to submit documents to the secretary of state proving they meet the constitutional requirements to be president. The secretary of state could then decide to keep a candidate off the Arizona ballot if he or she had reasonable cause to believe the candidate was ineligible. Arizona Secretary of State Ken Bennett opposes the bill, arguing it gives his office too much power, according



In this Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010 picture, Arizona Rep. Chad Campbell, D-Phoenix, left, and Warde Nichols, R-Gilbert, confer during a special session at the Capitol in Phoenix.

Associated Press

to his spokesman Matthew Benson. Benson said Bennett, a Republican, has no doubts about Obama's citizenship.

The bill now goes to the Senate, where supporters are trying to pull together enough votes to pass the measure. If they do, it's unclear if Republican Gov. Jan Brewer will give it her support. Her spokesman, Paul Senseman, said the governor won't comment on pending legislation, but he added she doesn't have doubts about Obama's citizenship.

The measure comes amid a string of controversial proposals in Arizona that have garnered national attention, including a sweeping illegal immigration crackdown awaiting action by the governor and a measure allowing people to carry concealed weapons without permits. The governor signed the gun bill last week. Rep. Tom Chabin pleaded with his colleagues to oppose the birth certificate measure Wednesday.

"When you undermine the

sitting president of the United States, you undermine our nation, and it makes us look very ugly," Chabin said Thursday.

But some supporters insist the bill isn't aimed at Obama, it's just common sense.

"It's our ballot," said state Sen. Jack Harper, who believes Obama has proven his citizenship. "The parties need to prove that their nominee is eligible to hold the office of president to be on our ballot." □

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Take-your-kid-to-work day appears to lose steam

By DON BABWIN

Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO — More than a decade after it began, take-your-kid-to-work day appears to be losing steam. Now it's keep-your-kid-in-school.

Thursday marked the 17th year for Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day. But some school districts sent strongly worded letters or e-mails to parents explaining that taking a child to work would put the youngster's education at risk. Many teachers found their Thursday classes largely unaffected.

"We had only six out today — that's actually less than usual," said Darrell Propst, principal of Taylor Road Elementary School in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, who asked parents not to pull their kids out of school. "Our attendance was very, very good today."

Though many kids still accompany a parent to work, some employers say the event increasingly conflicts with high-stakes standardized testing in schools. And this year, it was overshadowed by Earth Day, which celebrated its 40th anniversary on Thursday.

In Texas — at Dell Inc. in Austin and Southern Methodist University in Dallas — most of the focus was on Earth Day, not Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day.

"I haven't heard about that in a while," SMU spokesman Kent Best said. "It was a big deal maybe a decade ago. ... So today is the day?"

Travis Carter, a public relations executive in Dallas who has two children, ages 5 and 6, said his kids reminded

him it was Earth Day and took their recyclables to school.

"I am surprised to now hear that it's also take-your-kids-to-work day," he said.

The event was launched in 1993 and has always fallen on the fourth Thursday in April. But that date has drawn complaints from school administrators for well over a decade, especially because many standardized tests fall on or near the same day.

Some school officials have contacted the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation to ask that the event be held on a school holiday or during the summer, but the organization won't budge.

In Illinois, where state lawmakers have gone so far as to encourage companies to invite employees' children during the summer, a letter sent home with kids in one suburban Chicago district was paying off.

"In the elementary schools, we had 200 kids out" because of parents taking them to work, said Lynn Brandl, spokeswoman for Hawthorn School District 73. "That's about half of what it was last year."

In Phoenix, the superintendent sent out a letter telling students that missing time from school, even one day, means "his or her learning achievement suffers." Officials said a sampling of schools showed no significant drop in attendance.

"We see results with the letter," said Sandi Hicks, spokeswoman for the Deer Valley Unified School District, which has sent out a version of the letter for seven years.

Alicia Agugliaro arrives at work in an early morning fog, Thursday, April 22, 2010, in Princeton, N.J., as she brings along her 7-year-old daughter Eliana Agugliaro. School districts across the country are asking parents to keep their kids in the classroom instead of bringing them to the office during Thursday's "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day," saying the annual event disrupts learning at an increasingly crucial time of the school year.

Associated Press

Some companies said they do not participate in the formal national program because they host other career-oriented options for schoolchildren that they think are more appropriate.

But others said they agreed to move their events to another day after complaints that the event was disrupting the academic year.

"Our companies are quite cooperative and agreed to move (their events) to the third week in June," said Susan Carlson, executive director of the Arizona Business & Education Coalition.

But others stuck to the original date, including First Lady Michelle Obama, who spent about an hour Thursday taking questions from children of executive office employees.

In Florida, where some educators still enthusiastically support the day, Honeywell Aerospace hosted an event at its Clearwater facility, just as it has done for years.

A company spokeswoman said there's been no suggestion that the event be rescheduled, and there's been no drop-off in attendance. □



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Democrats set showdown vote on Wall Street bill

By DAVID ESPO
JIM KUHNHENN

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON — Declaring themselves short of patience, Democrats set an initial showdown vote for next Monday on legislation to clamp new regulations on the financial industry while Republicans insisted on more bargaining. President Barack Obama admonished Wall Street leaders “to join us instead of fighting us” to prevent a future national financial collapse.

The test vote loomed in an election-year climate, with lawmakers ready to campaign this summer on the results of this legislation — written in reaction to the economic crisis that threw the nation into recession — as well as the hard-fought health care



Traders work at the New York Stock Exchange during President Obama's speech, Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Associated Press

overhaul.

“The time for stalling is over,” declared Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada. That drew a quick response from the Republican leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky: “I don’t think bipartisanship is a waste of time.”

Without an accord with the GOP, which was blocking the start of formal debate on the bill, Democrats would need 60 votes to move ahead in the Senate. Despite some signs of wavering, all 41 Republicans in the 100-member Senate remained publicly opposed on Thursday.

Reid was eager to test the Republican resolve, even as bipartisan negotiations continued. Reid conceded that the timetable for a vote could change if the talks bear fruit. Without a bipartisan bargain, Democrats were determined to portray Republicans as Wall Street allies and put them through test votes until enough senators agreed to proceed. Emerging from a late afternoon meeting with Banking Committee Chairman Christopher Dodd, the committee’s top Republican, Richard Shelby, said chances of an agreement before Monday’s vote were “probably not probable.” He predicted Republicans would vote as a bloc to put off action on the bill.

At the same time, senior

Democrats signaled Thursday they hope to ease day-old restrictions a Senate committee slapped on the trading of financial derivatives, the complex investments blamed as a contributing factor to the economic near-meltdown of 2008.

The sweeping regulations represent the broadest attempt to overhaul the U.S. financial system since the 1930s. A House-passed bill and the pending Senate version would create a mechanism for liquidating large firms, set up a council to detect systemwide financial threats and establish a consumer protection agency to police lending, credit cards and other bank-customer transactions.

Opinion polls show the public is receptive to new federal curbs on Wall Street after twin catastrophes — the recession that has driven unemployment to double-digits and a banking crisis that has led to huge losses in Americans’ retirement accounts.

No details were immediately available on possible changes on derivatives. But the Obama administration and some Senate Democrats have raised concerns over provisions cleared by the Senate Agriculture Committee, including one that would effectively require banks to spin off their derivatives business.

Reid said the heads of two Senate committees had met to discuss combining competing proposals on derivatives, financial products such as corn futures or stock options whose worth depends on the values of underlying investments. Companies use them to hedge against risks, such as interest rate swings or oil price spikes. But they became a vehicle for speculation and helped trigger the financial crisis when the underlying investments — mortgage-backed securities, for example — plunged in value.

Reid’s comments were the first official word that the measure approved on Wednesday by the Agriculture Committee would not go directly to the Senate floor — even though the committee’s chair, Sen. Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, had told reporters she had assurances it would.

Lincoln, who faces a difficult re-election race, reacted with barely disguised anger. The committee “has passed not only the strongest, but the only bipartisan Wall Street reform bill,” she said in a statement released to The Associated Press. “This legislation will only strengthen the broader reform bill and it should be incorporated as is and sent straight to the Senate floor.”

Obama has made the broader legislation one of his congressional priorities, and in a speech in New York he chastised Wall Street for risky practices at the same time he sought its help for “updated, commonsense” banking regulations to head off any new financial crisis.

At a news conference during the day, top Democrats accused Republicans of falsely claiming a bill approved earlier in the Senate Banking Committee included a \$50 billion fund that would be used to bail out failing banks. “The lies are not taking hold,” said Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

Earlier, McConnell challenged Democrats to disprove his claim. “This bill would give the administration the authority to use taxpayer funds to support financial institutions at a time of crisis,” he said. □

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Burning oil rig sinks, setting stage for big spill

HOLBROOK MOHR

KEVIN MCGILL

Associated Press Writers

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A deepwater oil platform that burned for more than a day after a massive explosion sank into the Gulf of Mexico on Thursday, creating the potential for a major spill as it underscored the slim chances that the 11 workers still missing survived.

The sinking of the Deepwater Horizon, which burned violently until the gulf itself extinguished the fire, could unleash more than 300,000 gallons of crude a day into the water. The environmental hazards would be greatest if the spill were to reach the Louisiana coast, some 50 miles away.

Crews searched by air and water for the missing workers, hoping they had managed to reach a lifeboat, but one relative said family members have been told it's unlikely any of the missing survived Tuesday night's blast. The Coast Guard found two lifeboats but no one was inside. More than 100 workers escaped the explosion and fire; four were critically injured. Carolyn Kemp said her grandson, Roy Wyatt Kemp, 27, was among the missing. She said he would have been on the drilling platform when it exploded.

"They're assuming all those men who were on the platform are dead," Kemp said. "That's the last we've heard."

Jed Kersey said his 33-year-old son, John, had finished his shift on the rig floor and was sleeping when the explosion happened. He said his son told him that all 11 missing workers were on the rig floor at the time of the explosion.

An alarm sounded and the electricity went out, sending John Kersey and other workers scurrying to a lifeboat that took them to a nearby service boat, his father said.

"They waited for as many people as they could," Jed Kersey said. He said his son wasn't ready to talk publicly about his experience.

As the rig burned, supply vessels shot water into it to try to keep it afloat and avoid an oil spill, but there were additional explosions Thursday.

Officials had previously said the environmental damage appeared minimal, but new challenges have arisen now that the platform has sunk.

The well could be spilling up to 336,000 gallons of crude oil a day, Coast Guard Petty Officer Katherine McNamara said. She said she didn't know whether the crude oil was spilling into the gulf. The rig also carried 700,000 gallons of diesel fuel, but that would likely evaporate if the fire didn't consume it.

Coast Guard Rear Adm. Mary Landry said crews saw a 1-mile-by-5-mile rainbow sheen with a dark center of what appeared to be a crude oil mix on the surface of the water. She said there wasn't any evidence crude oil was coming out after the rig sank, but officials also aren't sure what's going on underwater. They have dispatched a vessel to check.

The oil will do much less damage at sea than it would if it hits the shore, said Cynthia Sarthou, executive director of the Gulf Restoration Network.

"If it gets landward, it could be a disaster in the making," Sarthou said.

Doug Helton, incident operations coordinator for the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's office of response and restoration, said the spill is not expected to come onshore in the next three to four days. "But if the winds were to change, it could come ashore more rapidly," he said.

At the worst-case figure of 336,000 gallons a day, it would take more than a month for the amount of crude oil spilled to equal the 11 million gallons spilled from the Exxon Valdez in Alaska's Prince William Sound.

The well will need to be capped off underwater. Coast Guard Petty Officer Ashley Butler

said crews were prepared for the platform to sink and had the equipment at the site to limit the environmental damage.

Oil giant BP, which contracted the rig, said it has mobilized four aircraft that can spread chemicals to break up the oil and 32 vessels, including a big storage barge, that can suck more than 171,000 barrels of oil a day from the surface.

Crews searching for the missing workers, meanwhile, have covered the 1,940-square-mile search area by air 12 times and by boat five times. The boats searched all night.

The family of Dewey Revette,



In this photo provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, response boats work to clean up oil where the Deepwater Horizon oil rig sank Thursday April 22, 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico. The mobile offshore drilling platform was engulfed in flames after an explosion April 20. The Coast Guard continues to search for the 11 missing workers.

Associated Press

48, said he was also among the missing. He worked as a driller on the rig and had been with the company for 29 years.

"We're all just sitting around

waiting for the phone to ring and hoping for good news. And praying about it," said Revette's 23-year-old daughter, Andrea Cochran. □

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US detains NY-bound passenger in Puerto Rico

BEN FOX,
Associated Press Writer
 SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — A man on a flight from West Africa to New York City was removed from the plane and detained Thursday after authorities apparently added him to a no-fly list during the trip.
 Customs and Border Protection agents detained the man while the Delta Air Lines jet stopped to refuel in San Juan, Puerto Rico after an overnight trip from Dakar, Senegal. The flight originated in Nigeria, the native country of a man accused of boarding a Detroit-bound airplane from Amsterdam in December with a bomb hidden in his underwear.
 The man detained in Puerto Rico was not immediately charged with any crime. Customs and Border Protection issued a statement identifying him only as “potential person of interest,” who was removed from the flight for questioning.
 But passengers told The Associated Press that the captain announced over the intercom that the

man had been added to a roster of people banned from travel to the U.S. while the plane was in flight.
 The captain described the passenger as a “serious security risk,” said Joan Mower, a passenger from Washington.
 “The good news is nothing happened, we’re all safe,” said Mower, a former Associated Press reporter, now director of development for Voice of America. “The question is how does a guy who is on the no-fly list get on a plane ... and Delta only hears about it over the Atlantic.”
 The man, a citizen of Gambia, was not on the no-fly list when he boarded the aircraft in Dakar, Senegal, said a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the issue publicly.
 It was not clear what triggered suspicions about the man. U.S. officials typically do not confirm whether or not any specific individual is on the no-fly list and, for security reasons, do not discuss what factors might lead someone to be banned from travel to the U.S.

The flight continued on without incident to New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport after the man was removed from the plane.
 Passenger Nbaye Beye said the man, who appeared to be in his late 20s, appeared nervous when approached by a U.S. agent but got off the plane quietly.
 “The other passengers were nervous but everyone was sitting calm and cool,” another passenger, Hassane Diallo, told Associated Press Television News.
 Delta vetted all passengers as required, checking to see if any are on a no-fly list, when the plane took off from Dakar, Senegal, said spokeswoman Susan Elliott.
 Flight 215 had taken off from Abuja, Nigeria on late Wednesday and stopped in Dakar, Senegal early Thursday before heading to New York. Delta said the diversion to Puerto Rico was to refuel. Elliott said such a diversion is not unusual for a full flight that runs into trans-Atlantic headwinds and was not related to the detention of the passenger. □






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PG-13	DEATH AT A FUNERAL			
daily:	4:15	6:30	8:45	
matinee:	12:00	2:00	late show:	11:00
PG	THE LAST SONG			
daily:	6:00	8:30		
matinee:	1:00	3:30	late show:	11:00
PG-13	CLASH OF THE TITANS			
daily:	6:00	8:30		
matinee:	1:00	3:30	late show:	11:15
PG-13	THE BOUNTY HUNTER			
daily:	4:00	6:30	9:00	
matinee:	1:30	late show:	11:45	
PG-13	WHY DID I GET MARRIED TOO			
daily:	4:00	6:45	9:15	
matinee:	1:30	late show:	11:45	
PG	ALICE IN WONDERLAND			
daily:	5:30			
matinee:	12:30	3:00	late show:	
R	GREEN ZONE			
daily:		8:15		
matinee:		late show:	11:00	
AT PASEO HERENCIA				
PG-13	THE BACK-UP PLAN			NEW
daily:	4:00	6:15	8:30	
matinee:	1:30	late show:	11:15	
R	COP OUT			
daily:	6:15	9:00		
matinee:	1:00	3:45	late show:	11:30
PG	HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON			
daily:	4:15	6:30	8:45	
matinee:	1:45	late show:	11:00	
PG-13	OUR FAMILY WEDDING			
daily:	5:30	7:45	9:45	
matinee:	12:45	3:00	late show:	12:00
PG	DIARY OF A WIMPY KID			
daily:				
matinee:	12:30	2:45	late show:	
R	REPO MEN			
daily:	5:30	8:00		
matinee:	12:15	3:00	late show:	11:00
PG-13	DATE NIGHT			
daily:	5:00	7:30	9:30	
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JERUSLEM FREEZE

Continued from front Page

Although Netanyahu was repeating his long-standing position, the timing of the statement threatened to undermine Mitchell's latest efforts to restart peace talks. Mark Regev, an Israeli government spokesman, denied earlier reports that Israel had officially rejected an American demand for a settlement freeze in Jerusalem.

In Washington, the State Department said the decision to send Mitchell was made late Wednesday after lower-level officials had meetings with Israeli and Palestinian representatives.

"We don't go to meet just to meet. We go there because we have some indication that both sides are willing to engage seriously on the issues that are on the table," said spokesman P.J. Crowley.

"We understand that the Israelis have a long-standing position," he added. "But ... the status quo is not sustainable. Mitchell arrived after a month-long break sparked by a dispute over Israeli construction in east Jerusalem, hoping to prod the Israelis and Palestinians to launch negotiations for the first time in more than a year. It was far from certain whether he would succeed, though Israeli and Palestinian

officials both indicated that they were ready to get past the deadlock.

The sides were set to begin indirect peace talks in early March when Israel revealed plans to build 1,600 homes for Jews in east Jerusalem. The announcement, which came during a visit by Vice President Joe Biden, infuriated the Americans and prompted the Palestinians to postpone the indirect talks indefinitely. The U.S. has been pushing Israel to cancel the planned housing project, halt other east Jerusalem construction and make other confidence-building measures to the Palestinians.

Netanyahu has repeatedly refused to curb Jewish construction in east Jerusalem, saying he is following a four-decade-old policy of his predecessors. Israel considers all of the city to be its eternal capital.

But in the TV interview, he said he hopes to resolve the differences with Washington, Israel's closest and most important ally.

"There are ups and downs. There is a very strong fabric of relations that will allow us to overcome these problems in the end and reach understandings," he said.

Israeli officials declined to say what gestures were under consideration. The government

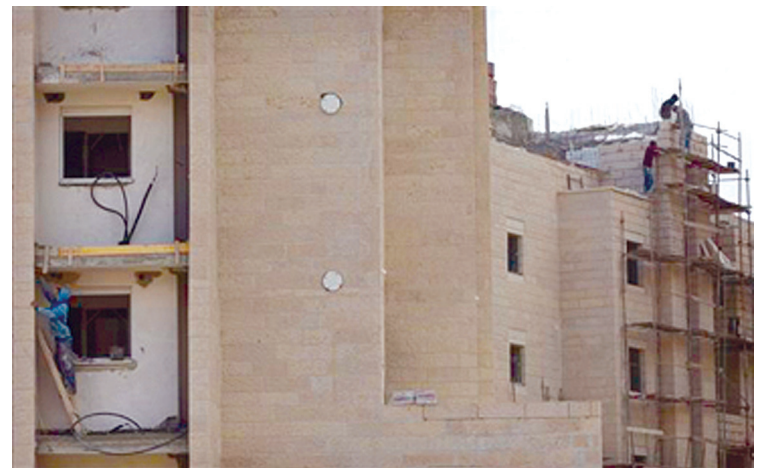
has debated proposals to free some of the thousands of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, turn over more West Bank territory to Palestinian control and possibly curb Jewish construction in the heart of Arab neighborhoods in east Jerusalem.

Some 180,000 Israelis live in east Jerusalem, the vast majority in Jewish neighborhoods that ring the area. But an estimated 2,000 Israeli nationalists live deep inside Arab neighborhoods, creating friction between the sides.

An estimated 250,000 Palestinians live in Arab neighborhoods of the city. A halt to Israeli housing activity in these areas, while short of U.S. and Palestinian demands for a freeze in all of east Jerusalem, would nonetheless mark a concession by Israel. Netanyahu would have a hard time selling even limited concessions to his government, a coalition dominated by hard-line nationalist parties.

"It is just impossible and unacceptable that people try to impress us that we should limit construction in Jerusalem," Benny Begin, a senior Cabinet minister, told foreign reporters and diplomats Thursday.

The status of east Jerusalem is the most explosive issue dividing Israelis and Palestinians. Israel captured



Construction workers are seen on a new housing development in the Jewish neighborhood of Har Homa, in east Jerusalem, Thursday, April 22, 2010. Aides to Israel's prime minister said Thursday that he has officially rejected President Barack Obama's demand to suspend all construction in contested east Jerusalem, a move that threatens to entrench a year-old deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

Associated Press

the area — home to key Jewish, Muslim and Christian holy sites — in the 1967 Mideast war and immediately annexed it. The annexation has never been internationally recognized.

Mitchell arrived late Thursday for his first visit since the spat with Israel erupted during Biden's visit in early March. He was scheduled to meet separately with Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Friday. Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat called the Netanyahu position on Jerusalem "very unfortunate" and said he hoped the U.S. "will be able to convince the Israeli government to give peace a

chance by halting settlement construction in east Jerusalem and elsewhere."

Nonetheless, he left the door open to resuming talks. Asked if anything short of an east Jerusalem construction freeze would bring the Palestinians back to the negotiating table, he said it would depend on what Netanyahu told the Americans.

Another Palestinian official said Abbas planned to bring any proposal to the 22-member Arab League — a move that would give a stamp of legitimacy for restarting the negotiations. The official spoke on condition of anonymity pending a formal announcement. □



Members of Flemish far right political party 'Vlaams Belang', display a banner that reads: '1100 days of Belgian chaos... Time for independence', at the Belgian Parliament in Brussels, Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Associated Press

ROBERT WIELAARD

Associated Press Writer

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgian Premier Yves Leterme's government collapsed after negotiations broke down to resolve a long-simmering dispute between Dutch- and French-speaking politicians over a bilingual voting district.

Language spat splits Belgian government

Dutch-speaking Liberals, one of Leterme's five coalition parties, quit the Cabinet on Thursday, accusing its Francophone counterparts of blocking a deal to break up the Brussels-area district the constitutional court ruled illegal in 2003. Leterme offered King Albert the resignation of his government.

The Belgian monarch did not immediately accept it, but began consultations with key politicians on the way forward. That may take several days, Parliament President Patrick Dewael told reporters.

In a statement, the royal palace called a political crisis "inopportune."

It said it could harm "Belgium's role in Europe and at an international level" — a reference to fear that the political deadlock could drag into the second half of 2010 when Belgium holds the EU's rotating presidency.

That is not an unreasonable fear. Leterme's government

took office March 20, 2008 after a political impasse over a similar and related linguistic spat that lasted a record 194 days.

Linguistic disputes — rooted in history and economic differences — have long dominated politics in this country of 6.5 million Dutch-speakers and 4 million Francophones.

Belgium is divided into Dutch- and French-speaking regions, which determines what single language is used on everything from mortgages and traffic signs to election ballots and divorce papers.

In 2003, the Constitutional Court ruled the bilingual Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde voting district illegal since it violates the separation of Dutch- and French-language regions. It comprises officially bilingual Brussels but also 20-odd towns in Dutch-speaking Flanders around the capital.

Dutch-speaking politicians have long complained the

district lets Francophones — who have moved from Brussels into Dutch-speaking suburbs — vote for French-speaking parties in the capital. Leterme's alliance of Christian Democrats, Liberals and Socialists — split into Dutch and French-speaking camps — took office March 20, 2008. They agreed to resolve the voting district issue by Easter of 2010, a deadline that was missed.

Leterme's government fell apart when he asked for another extension of the deadline.

"We are the end of our rope," Guy Vanhengel, a Flemish Liberal said Thursday. "I think that efforts to come to a negotiated settlement are not succeeding."

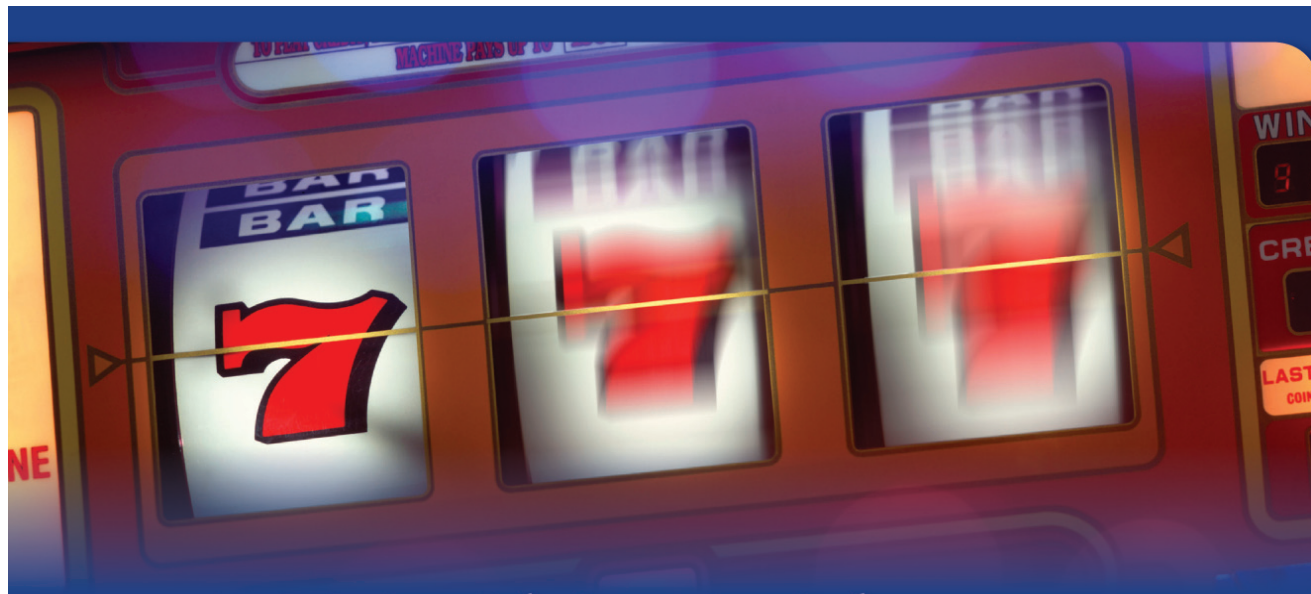
Belgium has three main regions: Dutch-speaking Flanders in the north, economically-lagging Francophone Wallonia in the south, and officially bilingual — but largely French-speaking — Brussels in the middle. The three regions have in the past

25 years acquired ever more autonomy.

As King Albert met with political leaders at the royal palace, about 15 members of the far-right Flemish Interest party sang the Flemish anthem and briefly hoisted a banner in the empty parliament chamber. It read: "Time For An Independent Flanders."

Flemish parties want their prosperous part of the country to be even more autonomous, notably by shifting taxes and some social security measures from the federal to the regional level. They also want more self-rule in transport, health, labor market and justice areas. Francophone parties say enough powers have been devolved since the mid-1980s and accuse Dutch-speakers of trying to cut loose Wallonia, troubled by desolate smokestack landscapes and an excessive jobless rate.

It is that tense backdrop that feeds the debate over the contentious voting district. □



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Report: S.Korea warned of N.Korean submarine attack

HYUNG-JIN KIM

Associated Press Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Military intelligence officers warned earlier this year that North Korea was preparing a suicide submarine attack on a South Korean vessel in retaliation for an earlier defeat in a sea battle, a newspaper said Thursday.

There has been growing speculation that North Korea was behind the March 26 explosion that split the 1,200-ton Cheonan in two and sank it, killing at least 39 people and leaving seven missing. Seoul has not directly blamed Pyongyang for the blast, and the North has denied involvement, but suspicion remains given the country's history of provocation and attacks on the South.

On Thursday, the mass-circulation Chosun Ilbo newspaper reported the Korea Defense Intelligence Command alerted the navy

weeks ahead of the ship sinking that North Korea was preparing underwater suicide teams in mini-submarines to attack the South.

These "human torpedo" squads were said to involve small submarines navigated so close to the target that their torpedoes or explosives blow up both target and the attackers, or are timed to explode while the attackers escape from the vehicle, the report said.

The attack preparations were aimed at retaliating against the South over its defeat in a naval skirmish in November, the paper said. The site of the sinking is near where the rival Koreas fought three times since 1999, most recently a November clash that left one North Korean soldier dead and three others wounded.

South Korea is investigating the wreck of the Cheonan and investigators say preliminary indications are the blast was external, not on board

the ship. Some experts say the investigation could take several years.

The two Koreas have never signed a peace treaty since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a truce.

The Chosun Ilbo said the military was investigating whether the navy and Joint Chiefs of Staff had been properly braced for a North Korean attack following the intelligence warning, though it's not clear whether the Cheonan sank because of an attack.

Navy and Joint Chiefs of Staff officials said they would not comment on the report because it involves military intelligence affairs.

Also Thursday, Yonhap news agency reported military intelligence officers believe a North Korean submarine torpedoed the Cheonan based on a joint intelligence analysis with the U.S. military.

Yonhap, citing an unidentified



South Korea elementary school students pay their respects in front of portraits of the deceased sailors from the sunken South Korean naval vessel Cheonan during a memorial event at the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, April 22, 2010. Military intelligence officers had warned earlier this year that North Korea was preparing a suicide submarine attack on a South Korean vessel in retaliation for an earlier defeat in a sea battle, a newspaper said Thursday.

Associated Press

military source, said the assessment was submitted to the presidential Blue House shortly after the warship sank. The Blue House, however, denied it has received such an intelligence report.

A high-profile North Korean defector living in Seoul said he believes North Korean leader Kim Jong Il masterminded the blast to stoke tension, cause social confusion in the South and shake its economy. □



Soldiers escort alleged drug trafficker Jose Gerardo Alvarez-Vasquez, known as "El Indio," as he is presented to the press in Mexico City, Thursday, April 22, 2010. Alvarez-Vasquez was arrested Wednesday night, along with 15 other suspected drug traffickers, during a shootout with soldiers in a neighborhood outside Mexico City that left two alleged gunmen dead, according to federal authorities.

Associated Press

IVAN MORENO

Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Troops battled a suspected drug gang in a wealthy neighborhood on the outskirts of Mexico City and captured an alleged major trafficker with a \$2 million U.S. bounty on his head, officials announced on Thursday.

Jose Gerardo Alvarez Vazquez — known as "El Indio" or "El Chayan" — is suspected of being responsible for a spike in violence in states near the

capital as part of a struggle for control of the Beltran Leyva drug cartel, the military and the federal Attorney General's Office said.

Authorities said Alvarez Vazquez, 45, was arrested along with 14 other suspected drug traffickers during a Wednesday night shootout in Huixquilucan, just west of the capital.

Three died in the shooting and two alleged traffickers were wounded. Investigators did not say whether the dead

Alleged top drug dealer caught on the outskirts of Mexico City

were soldiers or suspected drug dealers. The military said it seized more than a dozen guns and a grenade. "Cases such as this show the Mexican government's firm decision to continue fighting narcotraffickers," the Attorney General's Office said in a written statement. Among those arrested was

Ascencion Sepulveda Salto, also known as "El Gato," believed to be a powerful cartel lieutenant in Guerrero state.

The U.S. State Department says Alvarez Vazquez is a key member of the Arturo Beltran Leyva drug cartel and that he has overseen major deals involving crystal

methamphetamine and other drugs between Mexico, Central America, South America and the U.S.

He was indicted on four drug-related counts in 1997 in the Southern District of California and the State Department had issued a \$2 million reward for information leading to his arrest and conviction. □



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Ellis Island gives Springsteen heritage award



Singer Bruce Springsteen poses with, from left, his aunt Dora Kirby, 90, mother Adele Springsteen, 85, and aunt Ida Urbelis, 87, after being honored at the Ellis Island Family Heritage Awards Thursday, April 22, 2010 on Ellis Island in New York.

(AP Photo/Jason DeCrow)

By KILEY ARMSTRONG,
Associated Press Writer
NEW YORK — Everyone knows he was born in the USA, but it was Bruce Springsteen's European immigrant roots — and his family's 110-year American dream — that were celebrated on Thursday. Accompanied by his proud mother and aunts — the

women who "provided me with place" and "filled my family and all of my work with great meaning" — the rocker from New Jersey received an Ellis Island Family Heritage Award.

The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc. presents the award to immigrants or their descendants "who have

made a major contribution to the American experience." Also honored were investment banker Peter G. Peterson; Avon Chairman and CEO Andrea Jung, and NBA All-Star Dikembe Mutombo.

"You can't really know who you are and where you're going unless you know where you came from," Springsteen said.

Springsteen's maternal great-grandmother, Raffaella Zerilli, arrived at Ellis Island from Vico Equense, Italy, on Oct. 3, 1900, with five kids in tow.

"I docked at Ellis Island in a city of light and spires," their famous descendant later wrote in his song "American Land," a story not unlike their own.

They joined her husband, Raffaele, in Manhattan's West Village.

One of those kids, Antonio, grew up and married Adela Sorrentino. Their youngest daughter, Adele, went on to marry Irish-American Douglas Springsteen.

The Springsteens raised their three kids in New Jersey. One of them was a son.

When Bruce was 16, his mom borrowed money to buy him a guitar — an event he later chronicled in a tender tribute, "The Wish."

He taught himself how to play it — and went on to sell more than 120 million albums worldwide — including "We Shall Overcome: The Seeger Sessions — American Land," released in 2001. The title cut, "American Land," is a raucous, gritty pantheon of immigrant pluck and pride.

Adele Springsteen, now 85, who worked as a legal secretary for 47 years, went on to dance onstage with her son in New Jersey and Italy.

Her son — the self-described former high school outcast — played the Super Bowl halftime show and President Barack Obama's inauguration.

And on Thursday, mother, son and aunts found themselves on the island between New York

and New Jersey, in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty, basking in warm applause.

Adele Springsteen married into poverty and "held our family together under just great, great, great difficulty," said her son. "Thank you, Mom. I love you very much." Aunt Dora Kirby, 90, graduated with honors from college at age 67. "She's still cranking out people's income taxes," and will be available again next tax season, Springsteen said.

Ida Urbellis, 87, another aunt and a longtime garment worker, still works as a hairdresser on Wednesdays and Fridays.

"These fabulous women, they are my living connection to my heritage, to Ellis Island," said Springsteen.

"They have personified for me the tough optimism and the work ethic of first-generation-born American citizens," he added. "They lifted my spirit. I think they put the rock and roll in me." □



In a Friday, April 2, 2010 photo, New Orleans street musician Elliott Small, aka 'Grandpa Elliott', plays harmonica and sings on the corner of Royal and Toulouse Streets in the French Quarter of New Orleans during an interview with an Associated Press reporter. Grandpa Elliott's popularity went global after the Playing for Change hit viral video "Stand By Me" received millions of viewers. He will be a featured singer at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival that kicks off Friday

(AP Photo/Judi Bottoni)

By CHEVEL JOHNSON,
Associated Press Writer
NEW ORLEANS — For most of his 65 years, street singer

New Orleans street performer debuts at Jazz Fest

Elliott Small was famous only on a New Orleans corner — until an innovative 2008 Internet video went viral, bringing the white-bearded, overall clad musician with the turned up hat brim before a global audience in a worldwide collaboration performance of Ben E. King's classic, "Stand By Me."

Now Small, better known as Grandpa Elliott, will be a featured singer at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, one of the world's premiere music venues. The festival, which runs for two weekends each spring, kicks off Friday with more than 65 performances including Lionel Richie, The Black Crowes, Steel Pulse, George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic, Baaba Maal and Nathan and the Zydeco Cha-Chas.

Small debuts on Saturday in the Blues Tent. He's one of dozens of local musicians who will showcase their talent before an audience of thousands. Last year, more than 400,000 people attended the outdoor music, craft and food fest held at the Fair Grounds Race Course.

"I've been in the French Quarter all my life, singing to tourists," Small said in an interview before the festival performance. "All my life I've been entertaining."

Born and raised in New Orleans, Small started tap dancing and singing on the streets for tips when he was 6. As he got older, Small recorded several songs with arranger Wardell Quezergue and worked with Fats Domino. But he said performing with the more than 30 musicians on "Stand By Me" was humbling.

The Playing for Change producers, who say their aim is "to inspire, connect, and bring peace to the world through music," built a mobile recording studio and recorded musicians from California to South Africa performing "Stand by Me." They blended the resulting videos in an astonishing visual and musical collage.

"For them to come and take this old man off the street and put me where I'm poised to be," Small said, shaking his head. "My dream was always to touch the stars. I didn't know I would get the chance

to touch the sun and moon and maybe Mars too."

Quint Davis, who has co-produced the festival since 1970, said Small is like many who share in the fest's thrill ride.

"It's the same kind of grass roots texture and outreach that we started with, that we still have," Davis said. "Yes, we have big national groups, but we also have the Grandpa Elliotts, the Mardi Gras Indians and Robert Gibson, the guy who plays the one-string guitar. Our textures are still there and that's what we're most proud of."

Kelly Schulz, a spokeswoman for the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau, said the festival continues to be a huge draw for the city. She said hotel occupancy for Friday was at 99 percent and close to that for Saturday.

"We have seen such good will surrounding New Orleans since the Saints' Super Bowl victory," she said. "Our phones have been ringing off the hook with people wanting to come for our Spring festival season. That's the kind of thing we

could never manufacture and if we did, we wouldn't be able to pay for that kind of worldwide exposure."

Davis said the festival's music is a force all its own, mixed with unforgettable food.

"If all the music went away, we'd still have one of the best food festivals in the world," he said. "No one is going to go to a rock fest or a blues festival and get pecan-encrusted catfish or quail and andouille gumbo or shrimp and grits for \$6 a serving," he said. "We're talking gourmet food on a paper plate."

Davis said a \$45 ticket offers a good value "even in the face of the recession."

"Our price point is still about half of all the other big festivals. You can come out here and see 65 bands (a day) of all kinds, eat great food and learn about the region's history and culture."

Schulz said cost plays significantly in her work promoting the city worldwide. "We think there's a lot of pent up demand for travel and Jazz Fest and festivals like it help promote the value of New Orleans," she said. □

BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Missouri revenues down, more spending cuts planned

By DAVID A. LIEB,
Associated Press Writer

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Public schools took another funding hit Thursday as Gov. Jay Nixon cut more than \$45 million from Missouri's budget to offset worse-than-expected tax collections.

The governor's latest actions bring to more than \$900 million the total that has been vetoed or cut from this year's \$23.7 billion budget for state operations and capital improvements.

The spending cuts generally are attributable to the sluggish economy. As people earn less and buy less, they also pay less in state income and sales taxes, which comprise the bulk of Missouri's budget.

"Revenue is coming in even worse than anyone could have expected," said Linda Luebbering, the budget director for Nixon's administration.

April tax collections are down 19 percent from the same point last year, and collections are down 13.8 percent so far for the 2010 fiscal year that runs through June 30.

The average income tax payment has fallen nearly 30 percent this year compared to last year, while the average income tax refund has risen 8 percent, Luebbering said. State sales tax collections have declined for 10 straight fiscal quarters.

One of the largest budget cuts announced Thursday is an additional \$8 million reduction in state aid to public school busing, bringing the total cut for the school year to \$12 million. That equates to about 7 percent of the total busing aid that schools were due to receive.

Nixon also cut an additional \$4.9 million — on top of \$2 million in previous cuts — to the Parents as Teachers early childhood development program. That equates to a total cut of more than one-fifth of the nearly \$30.9 million the program had been budgeted to receive.

Thursday's cuts include a reduction in state subsidies for biodiesel plants and the St. Louis mass transit system. Nixon's administration noted that voters in the St. Louis area recently approved a tax increase for their transit system.

Also cut was an additional \$8.5 million in payments toward the health care benefits of future state retirees. Nixon now has cut a little over half of the \$42.1 million that had been budgeted for those payments. Luebbering said the state is making the payments "at a slightly slower pace."

As Nixon's administration announced the additional 2010 budget cuts, House and Senate negotiators began work Thursday on a final version of next year's budget, which must be passed by May 7.

The legislative negotiators agreed to make additional cuts to both the Parents as Teachers program and public school transportation in the 2011 budget.

Parents as Teachers offers developmental health screenings for infants and preschoolers and sends trained workers into parents' homes to provide child-rearing instruction. Next year's funding would be cut to less than half of what the program was supposed to get this year.

To offset the state funding cut, lawmakers are considering legislation that could require some families to pay a portion of the costs for the program if there are no developmental delays found in their children after six visits. □

Stocks recover after Obama speech, home sales data

By STEPHEN BERNARD
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — The stock market recovered from early losses and closed modestly higher Thursday after President Barack Obama's speech on financial reform contained no unpleasant surprises.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose about 9 points after being down about 108. Broader indexes also turned higher.

The market fell sharply early in the day as Greece's debt problems worsened and on fears that Obama would advocate tough restrictions on banks. When he didn't, stocks recovered.

Prices also got a boost from a jump in sales of existing homes last month.

In a speech in New York, Obama said the economy is recovering quickly but the progress needs to be felt more deeply among the millions of unemployed Americans. He has blamed Wall Street for helping push the country into recession. Obama gave a speech in support of his efforts to pass legislation that would overhaul financial markets. The Senate could debate the financial overhaul bill next week. The House has already passed its own version.

Investors were rattled early in the day by news about Greece. The country's borrowing costs surged again when Europe's statistics agency found that Greece's budget deficit last year was even larger than previously thought. The findings pushed Greece closer to tapping loans from 15 European countries and the International Monetary Fund. Moody's Investor Services downgraded Greece's debt and said more downgrades



Traders work at the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, April 22, 2010. Stocks fell Thursday following renewed concerns about Greece's debt problems and a disappointing forecast from eBay Inc.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

could be coming.

"It rings the alarm bell at least in the very short-term," said Steven Goldman, chief market strategist at Weeden & Co., referring to the latest problems in Greece.

Greece's debt crisis has undermined confidence in Europe's shared currency, the euro, and raised the troubling possibility that other weak European economies such as Portugal may also need to be bailed out.

Investors sent homebuilder stocks higher after the National Association of Realtors said sales of existing homes rose 6.8 percent last month after falling 0.8 percent in February. Sales of previously occupied homes had been expected to rise 5.2 percent, according to Thomson Reuters.

Stocks have been climbing steadily over the past 13 months, and the gains in the past two months have come with very few breaks. Many analysts have been expecting a break in the market's ascent, which would be in keeping with historical patterns. As occurred Thursday, most recent drops have faded quickly as buyers step in.

The Dow rose 9.37, or 0.1 percent, to 11,134.29. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 2.73, or 0.2 percent, to 1,208.67, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 14.46, or 0.6 percent, to 2,519.07.

Bond prices fell, lifting yields. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.78 percent from 3.74 percent late Wednesday.

The dollar rose against other major currencies, while gold fell.

Crude oil rose 2 cents to \$83.70 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The Labor Department reported that the number of people applying for unemployment benefits dipped to 456,000 last week, after rising unexpectedly the past couple of weeks. The drop was about in line with expectations.

Homebuilder Hovnanian Enterprises Inc. rose 25 cents, or 4 percent, to \$6.57. KB Home rose \$1.12, or 6.3 percent, to \$18.87.

Beyond concerns about Obama's speech and troubles in Greece, earnings reports also brought questions about the economy. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

MLB's science adviser examining HGH test

RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball commissioner Bud Selig says his science adviser is examining the human growth hormone blood test available through the World Anti-Doping Agency but isn't sure when the studying will be completed.

At his annual session Thursday with the Associated Press Sports Editors, Selig said University of California, Los Angeles professor Dr. Gary Green hasn't made a determination. The U.S. Anti-Doping Agency insists the test is valid.

"As soon as Dr. Green has finished his study on things, believe me, I'm most anxious to move forward," Selig said. "One can debate what HGH does or doesn't do. It needs to be banned."

While HGH is banned by baseball, the sport doesn't test for it.

Unionized major leaguers currently have only urine

testing. The players' union has said it would consider a blood test if it is validated.

Selig said that if baseball adopts the test, it would start using it for players with minor league contracts. He has repeatedly spoken with club athletic trainers about how prevalent the use of HGH is in the majors.

"The answer is we really don't know," Selig said. "Most think it's relatively low, but they really don't know." Cincinnati pitcher Edinson Volquez was suspended 50 games this week for testing positive for a banned fertility drug. It was the first suspension of a major leaguer under the drug program since Los Angeles Dodgers slugger Manny Ramirez was penalized last May. "The only thing that it proves is our program is working," Selig said. "We do a lot of education. We'll do more." On another topic, Selig said that while attendance is down between 1 and 2 percent this season, advance ticket sales



In this April 12, 2010, file photo, Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig responds to a question during a news conference at Target Field, in Minneapolis. Selig says his science adviser is examining the human growth hormone blood test available through the World Anti-Doping Agency but isn't sure when the studying will be completed.

Associated Press

for the rest of season were up 7 percent as of April 15, according to Major League Baseball Advanced Media, which handles online sales. "We've had a little weather problem, a little here and there, but I feel pretty good about it," he said.

Selig has noticed the low

crowds in Toronto, Citi Field and other places.

"It doesn't overly bother me," he said. "Some clubs it depends on winning and losing. But it's April, schools are still in, weekday games. When you are within 1 or 2 percent, it's just not anything to get concerned about." □

Rockets G Brooks NBA's most improved player

CHRIS DUNCAN

AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Rockets point guard Aaron Brooks was named the NBA's most improved player on Thursday.

The 1.83-meter (6-foot) Brooks set career highs in points (19.6 per game), assists (5.3) and rebounds (2.6). His scoring average went up 8.4 points from 2008-09, the highest increase of any qualifying player.

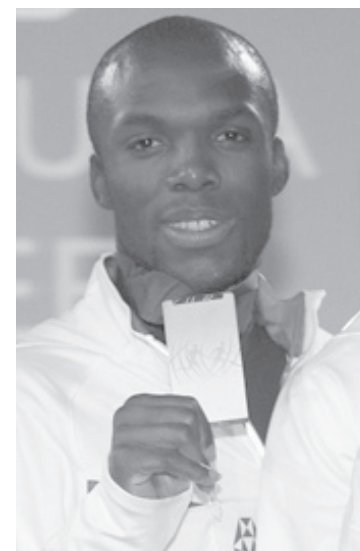
The Rockets missed the playoffs for the first time since 2006. Brooks started all 82 games while the roster went through several changes during the season, caused by injuries or trades.

Brooks, the Rockets' first-round draft pick in 2007, set a team record for 3-pointers made (209) and became the sixth player in NBA history to record at least 200 3-pointers and 400 assists. Brooks earned 403 of a possible 615 points, including 62 first-place votes, from a panel of 123 sports writers and broadcasters. Kevin Durant of Oklahoma City, George Hill of San Antonio and Marc Gasol of Memphis all tied for second with 101 total points. □



This March 19, 2010, file photo shows Houston Rockets' Aaron Brooks (0) driving against Boston Celtics' Nate Robinson (4) during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game, in Houston. Brooks has been named the league's most improved player, Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Associated Press



This Aug. 23, 2009, file photo shows United States' LaShawn Merritt showing his gold medal during the medal ceremony for the men's 4x400-meter final at the end of the World Athletics Championships in Berlin.

Associated Press

U.S. Sprinter Merritt accepts provisional suspension

PAT GRAHAM

AP Sports Writer

DENVER (AP) — Olympic and world champion sprinter LaShawn Merritt accepted a provisional suspension after testing positive for a banned drug.

Merritt used an over-the-counter male enhancement product that contained substances that caused him to fail three successive tests from October to January, according to a release from lawyer Howard Jacobs on Thursday. Merritt, who won Olympic gold medals in the 400 and as a member of the 4x400 relay in Beijing, said he hopes his family, friends and sponsors will forgive him for making "a foolish, immature and egotistical mistake." He will not compete until the case has been decided.

USA Track & Field CEO Doug Logan said in a release he was "disgusted by this entire episode."

Continued on Page 14

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NBA playoffs

Magic takes 2-0 lead, Spurs square series

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — The Dwight Howard-Vince Carter tandem again wasn't perfect but good enough to give the Orlando Magic a 92-77 win over the Charlotte Bobcats on Wednesday, and a 2-0 lead in their NBA playoff series.

Carter finished with 19 points and Howard scored 15. The Magic's star duo was less than stellar but took over when it counted most. They combined for 21 second-half points to help Orlando build a 20-point lead and hold on late.

Stephen Jackson showed no effects from his hyperextended left knee to score 27 points, and Gerald Wallace had 15 points for the Bobcats. But their 21 turnovers are a big reason why they're heading home still searching for the franchise's first playoff win. Game 3 in the best-of-seven series is Saturday in Charlotte. The Bobcats went more than eight minutes to start the game with only three points, and had just one field goal with six turnovers during that stretch. The good news was that the Magic was almost as bad early.

The first half was a turnover-fest for both teams, and nobody could consistently hit a shot. Things were so out of sorts that the normally sharpshooting J.J. Redick even badly missed the free throw from Charlotte coach Larry Brown's technical foul in the second quarter.

The Magic put together the closest thing to a run, and they gradually eked out a 41-30 lead at half time. With Charlotte's 14 first-half turnovers, though, they could've been up more. Orlando's star pairing belatedly got going. Howard had nine points in the first

five-plus minutes of the third before picking up his fourth foul, again relegating him to the bench.

Then, Carter took the reigns. Orlando's biggest offseason acquisition, Carter sliced his way through the lane for several layups late in the third quarter. He anchored a run that put the Magic ahead 75-55 after three quarters.

After Charlotte trimmed the lead to eight with 3:16, Carter followed with a jumper. Then Jackson missed a layup, and Jameer Nelson raced down court to convert a three-point play that sealed Orlando's win.

Spurs 102, Mavericks 88

In Dallas, Richard Jefferson scored 17 of his 19 points in the first half to help San Antonio beat Dallas and tie their first-round series at a game apiece.

Jefferson responded to criticism by coach Gregg Popovich after Game 1. He was 7 of 9 by halftime, several coming during a 12-1 surge

that broke the game open for good.

Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki went from hardly missing in Game 1 to hardly making baskets. He missed six of his first seven shots, and even missed a free throw after having made 88 in a row. He finished with 24 points, down from 36 in the series opener.

The Mavericks played their best only after they seemed to have buried themselves — down 16-5 early, they got within one by the end of the quarter; down 80-60 late in the third quarter they scored 12 straight points; down 13 again early in the fourth, they clawed within five. However, they never led and have now given away home-court advantage. Game 3 is in San Antonio on Friday, and the fans can't wait. They're especially looking forward to seeing Mavericks owner Mark Cuban, who fanned the flames of the rivalry in recent days by repeatedly saying, "I hate the Spurs." □



Orlando Magic center Dwight Howard questions a foul call on him by officials during the first half of Game 2 in the first round of the NBA basketball playoffs against the Charlotte Bobcats in Orlando, Fla., Wednesday, April 21, 2010.

Associated Press

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NHL Playoffs

Bruins, Capitals take strong series leads

BOSTON (AP) — Miroslav Satan scored in second overtime to give the Boston Bruins a 3-2 victory over the Buffalo Sabres on Wednesday and a 3-1 lead in their NHL Eastern Conference playoff series. The Bruins got the power play in the second extra period when Buffalo's Drew Stafford was caught on the ice as a sixth skater. Satan got a pass from Michael Ryder in front of the net and put it past Sabres goalie Ryan Miller.

Tuukka Rask made 35 saves for Boston and also assisted on Satan's goal.

Ryan Miller stopped 36 shots for the Sabres.

Game 5 is Friday in Buffalo.

Tim Kennedy and Steve Montador scored for Buffalo, which opened a 2-0 lead after two periods. David Krejci and Patrice Bergeron responded in the third period for Boston to send the game into overtime.

Both goalies made stunning saves to keep their teams in the game.

Rask reached out to knock

away a puck that even towering defenseman Zdeno Chara couldn't reach, preserving the tie with 11 minutes left in regulation. Miller stopped Blake Wheeler on a short-handed breakaway, then got a glove on a sneaky backhander from Satan early in the first overtime.

Capitals 6, Canadiens 3

In Montreal, Washington pulled away late to beat Montreal and take a 3-1 lead in the Eastern Conference series.

Alex Ovechkin broke a tie with 8:51 left with his second goal of the game and

Alex Ovechkin opened the scoring in the first period with Washington's first power-play goal of the series.

Michael Cammalleri and Brian Gionta scored to put the Canadiens ahead, before Mike Knuble tied it 2-2 with just 6.3 seconds left in the second period.

Ovechkin added his second of the game and fourth in three games in the third to



Buffalo Sabres goalie Ryan Miller, left, looks back as Boston Bruins right wing Miroslav Satan, of Slovakia, center, scores the game-winning goal during the second overtime period of a first-round NHL playoff game in Boston, Wednesday, April 21, 2010. The Bruins beat the Sabres 3-2.

Associated Press

put Washington up 3-2. Jason Chimera made it 4-2 less than a minute later. The Capitals got empty-net goals from Knuble with 2:27 left and Nicklas Backstrom with 10 seconds remaining, with Dominic Moore netting for Montreal in between.

Semyon Varlamov made 36

saves to win his third in a row for Washington. Carey Price stopped 32 shots in his first start of the series for Montreal.

Game 5 is Friday in Washington.

Canucks 6, Kings 4

In Los Angeles, Vancouver scored four times in a wild

third period to beat Los Angeles and even the series 2-2.

Henrik Sedin, Mikael Samuelsson, Sami Salo and Ryan Kesler all scored in the final 12:31 for the Canucks, who rallied from three one-goal deficits and avoided falling to a 3-1 series deficit.

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MERRITT

Continued from Page 12

"He has now put his entire career under a cloud and in the process made himself the object of jokes," Logan said. "In this day and age, a professional athlete should know better."

Merritt was recently notified that the presence of DHEA was the cause of his positive test. DHEA is short for dehydroepiandrosterone, which is a steroids precursor banned by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

The product that Merritt took is called "ExtenZe," a person familiar with the case told The Associated Press. It's a product that promises male sexual enhancement.

The person spoke on the condition of the anonymity because the details of the case were supposed to remain confidential.

USADA confirmed the sprinter tested positive and had agreed not to compete until his case has been resolved. USADA said it would make further announcements after the investigation and case were complete.

The USADA process can last from weeks to months. Typically, an athlete guilty of a first-time doping violation receives a two-year suspension. USADA does have a precedent of giving more favorable terms to athletes who cooperate.

"It's hard to say at this point what the end result would be," Jacobs said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. "But I think we can

put forth a compelling case, and that it was inadvertent and the circumstances that led up to it."

"To know that I've tested positive as a result of a product that I used for personal reasons is extremely difficult to wrap my hands around," Merritt said in the release. "Any penalty that I may receive for my action will not overshadow the embarrassment and humiliation that I feel inside."

Over the years, Merritt has developed a robust rivalry with 2004 Olympic champion Jeremy Wariner, one of the best in track since no one can touch Usain Bolt in the 100 and 200.

Merritt held off Wariner for the gold in Beijing. Then, last summer at the world championships in Berlin, Merritt topped Wariner again, flying past Wariner on the final curve.

The latest news ends a period of relative quiet on the doping front in track. High-profile doping convictions in recent years have resulted in stripped results and suspensions for Marion Jones, Tim Montgomery and Justin Gatlin, among others.

"You've got to look at the facts of the case. This is different," said Jacobs, who represents many athletes in doping cases, including Jones and Montgomery. "In LaShawn's case, at the end of the day, I'd be surprised if anyone disputes what caused it. It's important that people try to recognize the difference and not lump them all into the same category." □

AL Roundup

Hughes steers Yankees past A's

OAKLAND, California (AP) — New York Yankees pitcher Phil Hughes was on track for a no-hitter until the eighth inning, but had to be satisfied with a 3-1 win over the Oakland Athletics in the American League on Wednesday.

Hughes (2-0) struck out a career-high 10 in the Yankees' sixth straight win. He was in complete control until Eric Chavez opened the eighth with a one-hopper that went back to the mound. The Yankees pitcher had little time to react and the ball struck his left hip. Hughes couldn't find the ball in front of the mound as Chavez hustled for a single.

This was the second near-miss for the defending World Series champions in a couple of weeks. C.C. Sabathia held Tampa Bay hitless for 7 2-3 innings.

Twins 6, Indians 0

In Minneapolis, Francisco Liriano struck out six in eight scoreless innings to guide Minnesota over Cleveland.

Liriano (2-1) walked just two in a return to the form that made him an All-Star in 2006. Michael Cuddyer had a homer, a two-run triple in the eighth and three RBIs for the Twins. Indians starter David Huff (1-2) walked six and allowed

four runs in six innings.

Rays 12, White Sox 0

In Chicago, Tampa Bay rookie Wade Davis outpitched a very imperfect Mark Buehrle as the Rays smashed Chicago.

Davis (1-1) struck out six in six scoreless innings. After giving up a bunt single to start the game and walking three of the next five batters, he settled down, didn't walk anybody else and the only other hit he allowed was a single in the sixth.

Tampa Bay's Sean Rodriguez homered and drove in four runs.

Buehrle (2-2) was facing the Rays for the first time since his perfect game against them last season. He allowed six runs in 4 2-3 innings as the White Sox lost for the fifth time in six games to fall into last place in the AL Central.

In Anaheim, California, Miguel Cabrera hit a tying homer leading off the ninth inning and Ramon Santiago drove in the winner as Detroit edged Los Angeles.

Angels reliever Brian Fuentes (0-1), just off the disabled list after missing 14 games with a back strain, went to a full count against Cabrera before the Tigers' cleanup hitter homered to left-center.



New York Yankees' Phil Hughes, third from right, is visited on the mound by teammates after being unable to field a ball hit by Oakland Athletics' Eric Chavez, which ended Hughes' bid for a no-hitter during the eighth inning of a baseball game Wednesday, April 21, 2010, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

It was his fourth home run of the season and team-high 18th RBI.

Fuentes then walked Carlos Guillen and struck out Dan Kelly. Guillen stole second before a walk to Gerald Laird. Guillen was picked off on the basepath for the second out, but Santiago got a single to left field to score Laird.

Detroit's Phil Coke (2-0) got the win with a scoreless eighth inning.

In Toronto, Alex Gordon picked a good time for his first homer of the season, going long with two outs in the tenth to give Kansas City victory over Toronto.

Gordon drove a pitch from Scott Downs (0-1) to centerfield. It was just the second hit of

the season for Gordon, who missed the first 10 games with a broken thumb.

Jose Guillen hit a three-run homer for Kansas City and Alex Gonzalez had a two-run shot for Toronto, before the Blue Jays scored a run in the eighth to tie the game.

Robinson Tejeda (1-1) worked one inning for the win as the Royals avoided a series sweep.

Red Sox 8, Rangers 7, 12 innings

In Boston, Kevin Youkilis hit an RBI double with two outs in the 12th as Boston sneaked a victory that extended Texas' losing skid to six games.

Youkilis' shot rebounded off the base of the left-center field wall. It was Boston's second

straight last at-bat win.

J.D. Drew hit a grand slam for the Red Sox, and Darnell McDonald homered in his second straight game.

Texas' Josh Hamilton hit a three-run homer in the seventh that made it 7-7.

Neither team did much in the extra innings until Marco Scutaro singled with one out in the 12th. After an intentional walk, Youkilis delivered against Dustin Nippert (0-2).

In other AL games it was, Kansas City 4, Toronto 3, 10 innings; Boston 8, Texas 7, 12 innings; Minnesota 6, Cleveland 0; Tampa Bay 12, Chicago White Sox 0; Detroit 4, L.A. Angels 3; N.Y. Yankees 3, Oakland 1; and Seattle 4, Baltimore 1. □



Jason Bohn tees off on the 17th hole during the first round of the Zurich Classic golf tournament in Avondale, La., Thursday, April 22, 2010. Dufner ended the round tied for second.

Associated Press

Early rounds advantage on first day

AVONDALE, Louisiana (AP) — Jason Bohn took advantage of calm morning conditions to shoot a 7-under 65 and take a two-stroke lead over Jason Dufner, John Senden, Jeff Overton, Greg Owen and 2006 champion Chris Couch in the Zurich Classic on Thursday. Bohn had eight birdies and one bogey — when he tried to reach the par-5 18th green in two strokes and ended up in the water — at Pete Dye-designed TPC Louisiana.

"I was playing aggressively on the last hole," Bohn said. "If I had to do it all over again, I'd hit the exact same shot."

Every time he had a chance for a birdie, he made it, Bohn

said. "And I made a couple of par-saving putts," said Bohn, who had 26 putts.

Bohn was just one stroke off the course record of 64 set by Kyle Reifers in 2007.

Bohn's score held up easily as the wind came up in the afternoon and made the course play much tougher.

"There is not much coverage out here on this golf course," Dufner said. "It's pretty open. So if it can get windy, that will make play a lot more difficult."

Five players — former British Open champion David Duval, Charles Howell III, Kevin Sutherland, 2002 winner K.J. Choi and Troy Merritt —

opened with 68s.

Defending champion Jerry Kelly shot a 71.

This is the fifth time this year Choi has opened with a 68 or better.

Choi, Owen and Overton teed off in the afternoon.

"It was blowing," said Owen, who made five birdies on the front nine. "There were a few gusts, but it's obviously tough."

Defending champion Jerry Kelly had an opening-round 71.

Three players pulled out during their round due to injuries. George McNeill (elbow), John Mallinger (shoulder), and Jeff Maggart (shoulder). □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

NL Roundup

Halladay shutout leads Phillies over Braves

ATLANTA (AP) — Roy Halladay threw his first National League shutout — getting a couple of big assists from his defense — as the Philadelphia Phillies blanked the Atlanta Braves 2-0 on Wednesday.

Halladay (4-0), acquired in the offseason from Toronto, has lived up to the hype in his first four NL starts. He has worked 33 innings, allowing only three earned runs for an 0.82 ERA.

Raul Ibanez and Jayson Werth both hit RBI doubles against Braves starter Tim Hudson (1-1), but the win owed as much to a pair of brilliant defensive plays.

Center fielder Shane Victorino stole away a likely homer from Troy Glaus with a leaping catch in the second, and second baseman Chase Utley made a diving stop on a shot up the middle to start an inning-ending double play with the bases loaded in the seventh.

Halladay pitched his 16th career shutout. Last season, he led the majors with a career-high four.

In San Diego, the hosts won their sixth straight, downing San Francisco.

Jon Garland (1-2) held the slumping Giants to one run in seven strong innings.

Nick Hundley hit a two-run homer and Adrian Gonzalez added a solo homer for San Diego, which has won 10 of 12 against the Giants at Petco Park.

San Francisco's Todd Wellemeyer (0-3) had another rough start as he allowed two runs over four innings.



Philadelphia Phillies starter Roy Halladay, left, delivers to Atlanta Braves' Martin Prado, right, during the first inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, April 21, 2010, at Turner Field in Atlanta.

Associated Press

Cardinals 9, Diamondbacks 4

In Phoenix, Colby Rasmus homered twice, including a tiebreaking shot in the ninth, as St. Louis got a testy win over Arizona.

The benches emptied in the second inning when Cardinals ace Chris Carpenter, after being hit by a pitch, tried to take out Arizona second baseman Kelly Johnson when running on a double-play ball. No punches were thrown.

It was 4-4 when Rasmus opened the ninth with a home run off Chad Qualls (0-1). The Cardinals wound up scoring five times in the inning, capped by Skip Schumaker's three-run homer.

Jason Motte (1-1) got the victory for the Cardinals, who have won all five of their series this season.

Nationals 6, Rockies 4

In Washington, the home team beat Colorado, staying undefeated when the starting pitcher goes at least five innings.

John Lannan lasted long enough to mean the Nationals are 8-0 when their starter goes at least five, 0-7 when he doesn't.

Nationals reliever Tyler Clippard (3-0) struck out three in two scoreless innings.

The game was tied entering the eighth, when Rockies reliever Rafael Betancourt (0-1) allowed a leadoff single. After an intentional walk, Nieves lined a double.

Ivan Rodriguez padded the lead with a sacrifice fly before an announced crowd of 11,191, the lowest in three seasons at Nationals Park.

Brewers 8, Pirates 0

In Pittsburgh, Yovani Gallardo struck out 10 in five shutout innings to steer Milwaukee over Pittsburgh. Nine of the first 11 Pittsburgh batters that Gallardo (1-2) retired came by strikeout.

The Brewers' Ryan Braun, Rickie Weeks and Jody Gerut hit home runs and Alcides Escobar tripled in consecutive innings for Milwaukee, which has won three straight.

Pirates starter Zach Duke (2-1) allowed each of the Milwaukee homers.

Dodgers 14, Reds 6

In Cincinnati, Rafael Furcal drove in four runs with a single, double and triple to highlight another big performance by the majors' best-hitting lineup, as Los Angeles thumped Cincinnati.

Hiroki Kuroda (2-0) gave up

a pair of homers and had an overturned call go against him, but got the win.

The Reds have lost six of seven, with their rotation still lacking a victory. Top starter Aaron Harang (0-3) had another rough time, giving up 10 hits in only 5 2-3 innings.

The Dodgers got hits from top to bottom, piling up 18 overall and scoring in all but one inning while reaching a season high in runs.

Astros 5, Marlins 4

In Houston, Geoff Blum's first career pinch-hit triple drove in two runs in the seventh inning to propel Houston over Florida.

Blum's hit off Burke Badenhop (0-2) was chased almost to the wall in center field, and gave the Astros their fourth straight win.

Humberto Quintero had two hits including a homer for the Astros, while Wilton Lopez (1-0) got the win.

The Marlins suffered their first series defeat of the season.

In New York, Chicago snapped a run of four straight defeats by beating New York.

Carlos Silva (2-0) added six crisp innings to his surprising comeback, using his heavy sinker to cede only one run.

In other NL games it was, San Diego 5, San Francisco 2; Washington 6, Colorado 4; Milwaukee 8, Pittsburgh 0; Chicago Cubs 9, N.Y. Mets 3; L.A. Dodgers 14, Cincinnati 6; Philadelphia 2, Atlanta 0; Houston 5, Florida 4 and St. Louis 9, Arizona 4.

Marriott Honors Earth Day with Beach Clean Up And Green Activities

Associates And Guests Engage In Joined Efforts



PALM BEACH – This week the Aruba Marriott organized various ‘green’ awareness activities for associates and hotel guests honoring the 16th edition of the international Earth Day.

On Wednesday April 21st the Grounds department of the three Marriott properties organized their monthly beach clean up. As a part of the Earth Day initiatives hotel guests were invited to join in the monthly clean up, donating

one hour of their vacation time to assist in beautifying the beach.

Marriott’s Ocean Club guests, Ms. Pat Aubin, Ms. Judy Spencer and Ms. Monica Laramée, three friends from Vermont and Kentucky, were enthusiastic and pleased to see that the Aruba Marriott showed volunteer initiatives. “It is a great idea to involve your guests with these type of activities such as beach clean up”, said Judy Spencer.

Aruba International Film Festival unveils ‘green’ initiatives for inaugural event

School children take on shovels to plant trees on Earth Day

Alliance with Arikok National Park to benefit reforestation, environment



Hotel guests Mr. Jyoti and Mrs. Shashi Agrawal from New Jersey also joined in the activities and thought it was a useful way of spending the last morning of their vacation in Aruba on the beach in a slightly different way.

On Thursday April 22nd, the

resort’s Recreation Department organized a nature walk on the beach for hotel guests. For the little ones, the Bon Bini Kids Club offered arts & craft from recycling materials, art coloring, face & body painting. Hotel guest Lauren Grava (6) from Massachusetts had a lot of fun creating her own artwork made from

recycled material. The final activity of the day for the kids, was watching the fun and educational Pixar movie Wall-E, about a small recycling robot that embarks on a space journey. The children –and their parents- enjoyed the movie with popcorn and drinks.

Continued on Next Page



ORANJESTAD—Shon Shoco Garden in the Parke Nacional Arikok, Aruba’s national park gave out the vibes of a feel good movie, with numerous children planting trees, showing commitment for a sustainable world. The children did this on Earth Day as part of an initiative of the Aruba International Film Festival, which seeks to play an active role in the preservation and protection of Aruba’s ecosystem.

Read more on Pages B8 & B9

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On this Earth Day

Environmentalists urge NGO's in Aruba to work together



ORANJESTAD — The best way to celebrate Earth Day today is for non-governmental organizations to join forces and work together to increase awareness for the environment. That is the opinion of two avid environmentalists, Stanley Brown and Urvin Leest. Brown and Leest both participated actively in the creation of the National Integrated Strategic Plan, NISP, which outlines a view for Aruba in 2025. The NISP was a collaborative effort between the public sector and the community as a whole to formulate a plan for

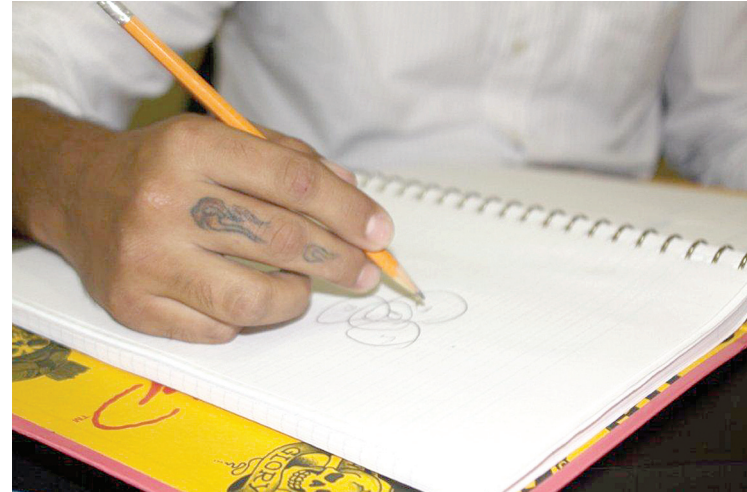


sustainable development for the island. Awareness for the environment is much more than focusing on the litter on the island, according to Leest. It means channeling all energy to change the mentality of the community, he continued. "And one way to achieve this is by motivating all NGO's to work together, with a common goal." Brown and Leest believe the NISP reflects the vision and desire of the Aruba community. "The people here want to see sustainable development in

various areas, to guarantee a better Aruba for our children. But they also want to see sustainable development from a collaborative point of view," Stanley Brown.

Urvin Leest noted that to many organizations are working individually, without noticing what others may be doing as well. The three main sectors, namely the Government, the business community and the NGO's have not been able to find the necessary connection to effectively influence the mentality of the community in general, regarding the environment, he said. "Each has their task, but lack connectivity for reaching common goals."

But, NGO's amongst themselves are not working according to a common objective or structure either, and before reaching a collaborative action on national level, there has to be a open dialogue between the environmental organizations, Brown and Lees emphasized. "Only then we are able to



reach out to the government and the private sector," Leest added. Once that happens, the three will be able to work in the interest of the environment and the Aruban people.

One of the tasks will be to make Arubans conscious consumers, in order to reduce their carbon footprint, Brown continued. His colleague Leest said the consumer has to realize that he or she has an impact on the environment by means of lifestyles. Only when the consumer adapts his or her lifestyle it will be possible to stop the import of foam boxes, plastic bags, as well as reduce

dependency on fossil fuels. "The mentality is Aruba's biggest problem. Litter and illegal dumps are just part of that problem."

Both Leest and Brown are convinced the process for changing mentality is slowly changing. The NISP itself is not a static, onetime project but still lives on. Moreover, more and more businesses are becoming environmentally responsible. And even though some may lag behind, the reality is that it will not be a matter of choice, but necessity to become responsible citizens in terms of the environment.

Associates And Guests Engage In Joined Efforts



Continued from Page B1
Over the past years the Aruba Marriott has been very active in implementing green initiatives such as using LED lightning, low limit temperature programmable thermostats in rooms, recycling carbon, paper and glass separately and using cooking oil to create bio-diesel.

Beach and island clean ups have been a cornerstone of the Marriott Spirit to Serve our Communities since the company started operating in Aruba in 1995. Since December 2009 the three

Marriott properties have implemented a monthly beach clean up that associates participate in.

To make more use of recycled products, the Marriott introduced eco friendly bags, note books and recycled mugs as give aways for associates and business relations to encourage 'green' thinking.

Marriott's Hotel Manager Louella Brezovar set the right example on Earth Day by wearing a 'recycled' work uniform. "At first I wasn't sure how comfortable this uniform

would be. I decided to try out a pair of pants created out of 25 recycled water bottles and to be honest, you don't feel or see any difference. I am very enthusiastic about initiatives like this", Brezovar stated.

To conclude the week's activities a community project will be organized this Saturday at the Santanero Scouting Club in Dakota where a group of Marriott associates will volunteer in cleaning up.

In the pictures:

-- Hotel guest Lauren Grava (6) from

Massachusetts creating her own artwork made from recycled material at the Bon Bini Kids Club.

-- Group picture, associates and guests after a successful beach clean up.

-- Assistance from the Sandsister, collecting materials and cleaning the beach.

-- Marriott and Caribbean Drip associates gather together for the beach clean up.

-- Marriott guest Mrs. Agrawal enjoys her last vacation day lending a helping hand

-- Hotel guest Mr. Agrawal volunteering with Marriott's beach clean up. Marriott's Ocean Club guests Judy, Pat and Monica lending a helping hand with the beach clean

up. Children and parents enjoy watching movie Wall E at the Bon Bini Kids Club Garfield collecting the waste material from the beach clean up. □



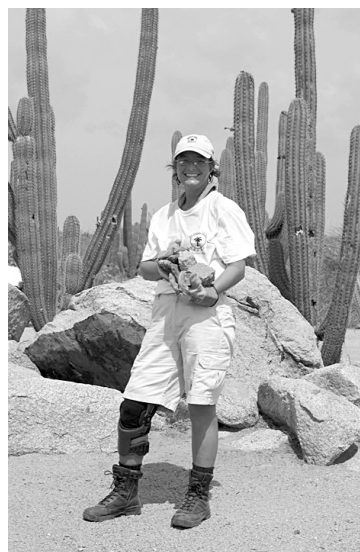
De Palm Tours adopts Aruba's most important tourist attraction



ALTO VISTA – The historic chapel of Alto Vista, one of Aruba's most valued and cherished tourist attractions was formally adopted by De Palm Tours.

De Palm Tours, Aruba's largest fun and adventure tour company, ventured out with dozens of volunteers scouring the sun-kissed slopes of the hilly landscapes removing all debris entangled in cactus, and strewn around by the wind. In addition to trash collection, the company raked, landscaped and beautified the green circle at the heart of the Alto Vista parking lot, spending time to improve the looks and the feel of the sacred chapel environs.

"We will over time dedicate more time and more resources, to Alto Vista," says company general manager Warren Stanley. "We now



have officially committed to maintain and upkeep the area, and are proud to preserve and protect, one of Aruba's most important landmarks."

Pictured here board member Ricky Malmberg and general manager Warren Stanley with their staff, during the Earth Week related clean up, orchestrated by the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association, under the Adopt a Mile program, championed by the Environmental Committee. De Palm Tours is a one-stop portal to fun and adventure! The company's wide selection of tours and activities has been thoughtfully developed with Aruba's visitors in mind – for quiet time, mellow cruising, amazing discovery, wet 'n wild action, cool comfort, and rugged exploration. The company's unique high-energy and low-impact repertory for day and night,



land and sea, is guaranteed to bring an unforgettable dimension to everybody's vacation. Millions of Aruba first-timers, repeaters and

locals have selected De Palm with confidence for almost one-half century and have helped make the company the largest activities provider on



the island. Friendly service, professionalism and safety apply to romantic sunset sails, luxury coach sightseeing, wild jeep rides, underwater snorkeling, Sea Trek, SNUBA, and splashing, sliding water park fun. The De Palm Tours agents at all major hotels, are personal activity gurus, the Leisure Specialists guiding guests according to their interests, preferences, and budget. □

Over 120 participants welcomed this initiative and were very committed to work with the program

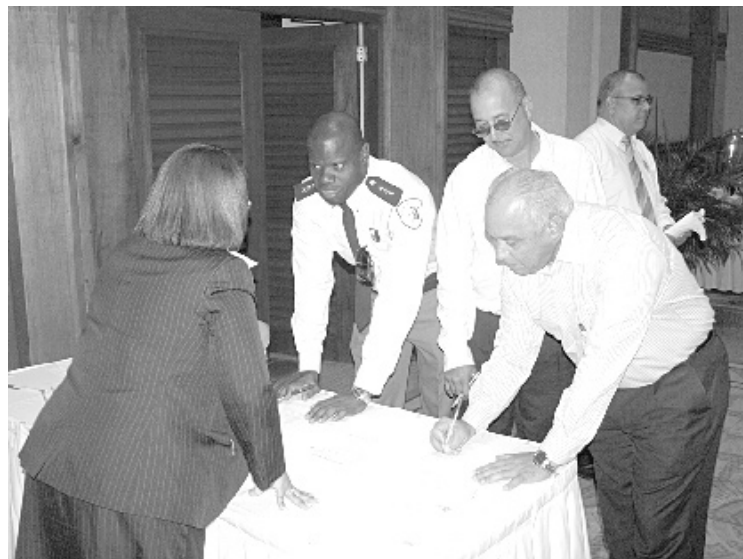
Well attended Kick-off session with AAA

Airport Total Quality Management Program 2010



ORANJESTAD – More representatives of all the than 120 participants, key stakeholders at the airport

attended the kick-off session of the Airport Total Quality Management Program 2010 which was held in the Renaissance Convention Center on Tuesday, April 20. During this 2 hour kick-off session, the Quality Management Program was introduced and offered to the Airport Community. Private and public sector managers of the Airport Community were invited and given a brief explanation of the program. Presentations were given by Mrs. Sanju Luidens-Daryanani, Senior Tourism Advisor of the Minister of Tourism, Mrs. Joyce Bartels-Daal and Mrs. Helen Guda of Aruba Learning and Mr. Peter Steinmetz, Managing Director of Aruba Airport Authority N.V. The program will start in May 2010 and is aimed to enhance



the awareness of the airport employees -both in the private and public sector- of their role as welcome and farewell ambassadors. The training will focus on the right attitude towards the airport visitors, tourists and locals alike: Courtesy Attentive Responsive and Explain (“CARE”). All speakers emphasized

that the airport employees should give the tourists a lasting positive impression of the island and that in enhancing the airport product partnering, cooperation and the interdependency of all stakeholders will be key elements. “We of AAA are more than happy to include all our



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partners in this program, as together we are one airport working for the benefit of one island, Aruba”, said Peter Steinmetz, Managing Director of AAA N.V. “The kick-off session is just a small taste of what’s to come in the near future. As we learned in the kick-off session: We work together because we care!” The airport community consists of over 1200 dedicated employees of among others the Aruba Airport Authority, Immigration, Customs, Civil Aviation, retail and food & beverage concessionaires and other service providers who will all be trained in this program in the coming months. □

Professional Administrators Enjoy El Gaucho on their Special Day



ORANJESTAD – El Gaucho Argentine Grill welcomed many local companies from as early as 11:30 a.m., on the day dedicated to secretaries and administrative assistants. Since 1952, the International Association of Administrative Professionals has honored officeworkers by sponsoring an Administrative Professionals

Week. Today, it is one of the largest workplace observances outside of employee birthdays and major holidays. In honor of the day, El Gaucho Argentine Grill was dressed up with fresh flowers, the strolling musicians supplied the ongoing entertainment and the kitchen dished out outstanding, top quality beef from Argentina & fresh

seafood specialties, in their traditional presentations. DufryAruba, GiselleBoutique, Oduber Agencies, CasBon, Athlete's Foot, Attorney Duijneveld's office, and many more including the El Gaucho administrative staff, relaxed over cocktails and sangria, spending quality time with co-workers, in appreciation of their many contributions. □

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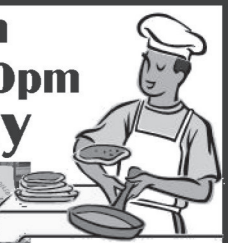
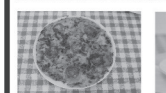
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For advancing women & other diverse groups

Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) earns 2010 Catalyst Award



Diversity among RBC Executives: From left to right are André Conrad Roberts, Director of Communications at Royal Bank of Canada; Christine Wong, Director of Institutional Equity Sales at RBC Dominion Securities Inc.; Gord Nixon, RBC Chief Executive Officer; Zabeen Hirji, Chief Human Resources Officer at RBC; and Niranjan Vivekanandan, Vice President of RBC Commercial Banking.

RBC's commitment to enabling the progress of women and minorities and their climb up the corporate ladder has earned the bank international recognition as a recipient of this year's Catalyst Award for diversity. RBC is the parent of RBTT Financial Group and RBC Royal Bank of Canada. Today, women comprise nearly 40 per cent of executives at RBC, holding 54 per cent of management roles. Visible minorities account for 14 per cent of executives and their representation in management roles has doubled from 13 to 26 per cent in the last decade. The global organization has diverse operations with 77,000 employees who speak over 100 languages, serving 18 million clients across Canada, the U.S., the Caribbean and elsewhere. RBC president and CEO, Gordon M. Nixon accepted the prestigious Catalyst Award on

behalf of RBC for outstanding diversity and inclusion initiatives that advance the representation and influence of women and other diverse groups in business. Catalyst is the leading nonprofit membership organization working globally with businesses and the professions to build inclusive workplaces and expand opportunities for women and business. "Clearly, supporting diversity is the right thing to do, but it also represents incredible business potential. To ignore the value offered by huge parts of the workforce and the markets we serve would be to miss a significant business opportunity. The link between diversity and the success of a business is clearly there," said Nixon. "The question is not whether we want a diverse workforce-it's already here-but rather how to attract and develop the best talent which happens to be diverse. There's a

lot of hard work required to move from simply having diversity to unleashing its full potential." The global RBC Diversity Leadership Council, which Mr. Nixon established in 2001 and has chaired since its inception, and a growing team of diversity champions throughout RBC are part of Mr. Nixon's vision of ensuring the diversity opportunity is pursued in all parts of the company. Zabeen Hirji, Chief Human Resources Officer for RBC, helps to drive RBC's diversity strategy with its focus on talent and workplace, clients and communities. "At RBC we've built a culture where diversity is a core value, where we value differences and treat each other with respect. We believe that to succeed, we must harness everyone's talents and energy and apply them to achieving our common goals. Frankly, it's a win-



Gord Nixon, RBC's Chief Executive Officer, poses with the Catalyst Award which the Bank received for its diversity initiatives.

win situation: when employees achieve their full potential, RBC wins too," said Hirji. RBC's winning initiative includes many components to ensure employee success, including reciprocal mentoring that matches employees of different backgrounds and different levels so that they can learn about diversity from each other; specific staffing goals, coaching and development plans for women and visible minorities; and supporting Employee Resource Groups, which enable and expand the diversity discussion across the organization. RBC has also integrated its strategies across employees, clients and communities—one feature of the company's

approach to diversity that attracted the attention of the Catalyst organization. For example, a women's market strategy is targeted to women business owners with a dedicated public website and internal roles where women serve as experts for this market segment. For Mr. Nixon, the Catalyst Award provides an opportunity to ignite further efforts that he hopes will drive prosperity for customers and for the bank. "I'm passionate about it," said Nixon. "We have embedded diversity throughout our business and for that we are a better company - a company that can effectively serve our diverse clients and recruit the best talent. It's one of our core values and part of what we do at RBC." □

Live Music & Entertainment at Casa Tua Barcelona on Friday Night



ORANJESTAD - Enjoy your Paella and Sangria together with this fantastic live show! The downtown atmosphere is cool and relaxed with its in- and outside seating.

Our Flamenco Show will be extended this Holiday Season with the performance of Kavey Yarzagaray. This Flamenco guitar player will perform together with Angela Croes on Friday night. This is a show that shouldn't be missed.

The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is also the new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! **A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad.**

All days of the week we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata



Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...



Casa Tua Barcelona Downtown open from 11.30am to 10.30pm, Sunday from 5pm to 11pm tel. 588 5695. Casa Tua Palm Beach open from 5pm to 11pm, tel 586 8470

Adam Steinfeld live tonight!

Don't miss Magic & Comedy tonight at the Westin



STEINFELD: 'MAGIC LIVE!' Theater-of-illusions show... now at the WESTIN - Aruba, see it live! 9pm nightly NightMagic-Comedy- Master of illusions. PREPARE to Witness TOP-Class Illusions, Magic & Comedy on Stage. Adam Steinfeld's Magic Live!® show, at the WESTIN - Aruba... 'Sensational!', 'Amazingly Funny!'...the Hottest ticket in Town! A Must See" 'BEST MAGIC SHOW, I've seen in ages...and I hate Magic! - Carol Butz, Belair, Maryland.

'MagicLive!...is Hip-Comedy Entertainment, Adam is the ultimate Modern Magician' - Jacque Polak, CBS-TV. Steinfeld sophisticated card-sharp street magic, mixed with grand theater illusions is a visual feast...this will be the highlight of your vacation. -Al Blanchard, mystery novelist, Boston, MA.

Steinfeld's, comedy magician, likable on-stage personality, comic interactive-wit, and amazing magic, mixed with his dream-like theatre-of-

illusions, is a sensory overload of the imagination, along with his lovely dancers...a treat for the entire family.

SEE IT LIVE! On-Stage!

"It's obvious Adam's real passion is performing in front of a live audience, as his charisma and charm create an unforgettable show!" Steinfeld is a 'Master of Magic', he invents many of his own Las Vegas illusions that are designed in England, fabricated in Vegas, and travels with him on tour, in a explosion of amazing fun.

THE MUST-SEE SHOW - YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT! AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK, Adam Steinfeld: 'MAGIC LIVE!', from Monte Carlo, Hong Kong, Orlando, Miami Beach, Biloxi, Boston, San Juan, New York, Aruba to Vegas, it's the coolest show in town, taking up where Houdini left off." MAGIC-GRANDILLUSION - COMEDY



IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
ShowTime: 9:00 pm, nightly, (7 days a week) theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door, MagicLive box office (hotel lobby), or Westin-aruba concierges desk
Box office opens at 7:30pm nightly
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.95 adults
Group Sales: 561-1090
ALL AGES APPROPRIATE

Aruba International Film Festival unveils 'green' initiatives for inaugural event

School children take on shovels to plant trees on Earth Day

Alliance with Arikok National Park to benefit reforestation, environment



ORANJESTAD—ShonShoco Garden in the Parke Nacional Arikok, Aruba's national park gave out the vibes of a feel good movie, with numerous children planting trees, showing commitment for a sustainable world. The children did this on Earth Day as part of an initiative of the Aruba International Film Festival, which seeks to play an active role in the preservation and protection of Aruba's ecosystem.

AIFF just announced plans to implement pro-environmental practices throughout the festival to minimize the ecological footprint of the week-long event, June 4 to 11. In addition, the producers

of the festival Giuseppe Cioccarelli and Jonathan Vieira launched projects to help promote environmental preservation, particularly in the national park. The two festival founders and organizers invited over one hundred students from the International School of Aruba, de Schakel and Conradus Coronel to plant a large number of trees assisted by park rangers. Minister of Culture, Michelle Hooyboer Winklaar was also present to experience, what Park Biologist Diego Marquez considered magic in the making.

Cioccarelli said the AIFF want to have an active roll in the preservation and protection of Aruba's ecosystem and therefore deemed it important to form an alliance with the Parke Nacional Arikok foundation, to contribute in the maintenance of a 'green' Aruba. The Earth Day activity at the park yesterday was the first step. The local school children who were invited to attend learned about ways to reduce their own carbon footprint through conservation and the use of eco-friendly



technology. The lesson culminated in the reforestation of the Shon Shoco Garden in the park. The trees the children planted in turn will revive the habitat for birds, such as the Aruban parakeet, said Guiseppe

Cioccarelli. Cioccarelli's partner, Jonathan Vieira, congratulated him with the success of the initiative and admitted that he was skeptical about introducing such an initiative even before the festival ever took place. He said Cioccarelli's insistence and his passion and commitment to the environment overcame his skepticism and now is



happy to share in the credits for the project. Minister Hooyboer Winklaar, who is responsible for Parke Nacional Arikok, thanked the AIFF organizers for bringing a feeling of excitement to Aruba, not only with regard to the festival, but also by focusing on the beauty of becoming environmentally conscious and



satisfaction upon seeing two major components for Aruba, namely the festival and the park reached an important connectivity on behalf of the entire community. Diego Marquez of Parke Nacional Arikok too applauded the support of the AIFF to the park. He encouraged the children to respect Mother Earth, to be aware of the fact

that humans are allowed to live on it but have a responsibility to take care of it for others as well. Moreover, their actions on Earth Day yesterday, by helping plant a large number of plants, attest to their love for Mother Earth and all her creatures. After planting the trees, the children received a well deserved treat by Ben & Jerry's,



who donated CO2 neutral ice cream, with all environmental friendly ingredients. The ice cream was even delivered in the company's solar powered truck. Other green projects of AIFF in the park include the reforestation of the Plantation Prins with coconut seedlings collected during the cleanup of Rancho Daimari. AIFF also plans a fundraising activity to partially offset the cost of an irrigation system to maintain those trees. Added benefits are that the abandoned coconut plantation at that location will be cleaned and that the activity will include instruction on planting a sustainable garden in the Aruba climate. Moreover, the festival organizers will support the Park Foundation efforts to construct a greenhouse in which to grow trees for further reforestation. They will do this by encouraging corporate responsibility among the

corporate sponsors and vendors at the film festival. Additionally, AIFF will offer Arikok a place to set up a booth at the festival. There they can inform the public about the initiatives the Park is taking in reforesting and sustaining the plants in the Park, and providing a habitat for Aruba's natural wildlife. Park Rangers will also be able to enlist volunteers and to organize hiking tours from their booth. As for the festival itself, AIFF and the host venue Paseo Herencia agreed to place recycling bins around the compound during the event from June 4 to 11. These bins will be collected daily and their contents recycled. The visitors will receive maps to facilitate their walking or eventual biking. They will have access to reusable water bottles, filled with pure Aruba drinking water, and restaurants at Paseo Herencia will all be provided with AIFF



cups, napkins and other paper products made entirely of recycles and recyclable paper. Even though the mission of AIFF is to encourage, educate and activate young Aruban filmmakers, it has taken the responsibility to create awareness for the environment as well, paving the way for renowned actors like Richard Gere, who will open the event, to continue their own humanitarian efforts through the craft of film making. □

Tony Roma's is the island's headquarters for ribs!

Many restaurants claim to have the best ribs in the land, but only Tony Roma's world famous ribs continue to rack up taste awards from a variety of cities, regions, and countries across the globe. Tony Roma's Palm Beach brings this classic to Aruba.

Great ribs put Tony Roma's on the map, but the menu also features an array of flame-grilled favorites including steaks, seafood and chicken. The menu also serves up fresh salads, fantastic burgers and sandwiches, grilled fresh local fish, mouthwatering desserts and delicious appetizers - especially the popular, made-from-scratch Onion Loaf.

Today, there are more than 240 locations on five continents. From Seattle to Miami, Tokyo to Madrid, and Calgary to Aruba, Tony Roma's is creating an international incident with its flame-grilled fare. Discover why Tony Roma's is now an island dining institution!

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Salad & Cup of Soup.....	\$10
Half Slab Original Baby Back Ribs.....	\$10
Bow Tie Pasta in Alfredo Sauce.....	\$10
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HUMAN HINTS

Train Your Brain and Transform Your Life

The Universe reflects your energy back to you. To change your life, change your energy. To change your energy, change your perspective. Your attitudes about the details of your life determine the tone of your daily existence. Your attitudes generate your emotions, which are reflected back to you in your life.

An attitude is an automatic emotional reaction. Think of a person or situation that gives you bad feelings, or imagine something that you don't like to do. Feel the automatic emotional response within your body. There is a definite change within your Being, when a bad attitude takes over.

In the moment that you feel the attitude overcome your body, snap yourself out of it by introducing something foreign and unexpected. Imagine doing something like touching your nose and letting out a beep, or think of something that makes you laugh. The thought will snap your mind out of the automatic attitude and give you a chuckle. You replace the bad association with a good attitude.

There is a positive association for everything you don't like in your life. If you have an abusive partner or boss, think of how goofy they are, taking themselves so seriously. Have compassion for them because they're not very happy. If they seek to control

you, they probably feel like they don't have any control over their own lives. If you have a physical challenge, know that it gives you a unique perspective that will help others. You can blaze the trail for others to follow. Your personal accomplishments will inspire all who watch in amazement as you defy limitation.

If you think of money as something that's hard to get, or a troublesome pain to deal with, your bad associations will block money from your life. If you see money as your best friend who will do anything for you, you will love working for it, and organizing it will be like helping your best friends clean up their lives.

Change your attitude and you will liberate yourself from three dimensions. This is a big key in removing your emotions from the forces of three dimensional illusion, while still in your body.

When you consistently shock your mind out of the pattern and replace the association with something positive, you will train your brain to stay out of negative frequencies. With a positive association, you won't mind taking care of your necessary daily responsibilities because you now see the good in your actions.

You now know how to train your brain. With this technique, you never have

to dislike what you're doing again. Just change your association. Over time, the positive will become natural, and you'll laugh at your old ways.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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La Cabana Administrative Assistants enjoy a special treat



PALM BEACH – Norma from Accounting, Helen from the Executive Office, Shereen from Members Relations, Patricia from Housekeeping and Jacky from Food & Beverage were treated to an

exclusive Teppanyaki party at Blossoms as they celebrated Administrative Assistants Day feasting on delicious dishes prepared in their honor. The hard-working crew also enjoyed

ice cream for dessert laced with warm words of appreciation from the resort department heads, before taking the rest of the afternoon off. □

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Bailouts vs. Breakups

Jeremy Lott

America these days is in one of those Alice in Wonderland moments where the incredible and impossible become all too likely. Case in point: Republicans are seriously arguing that the federal government should break up big banks. No, that wasn't a typo and we're not talking backbenchers or windmill tilters here. Senators John Cornyn, Johnny Isakson, Richard Shelby, and John McCain have voiced some support for the reinstating the Glass-Steagall Act, a piece of New Deal legislation whose effective repeal in 1999 allowed American banks to greatly expand in size and scope.

This sudden burst of populist rethinking has been inspired by the Democrats' push for financial reform legislation. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell has charged that what the Democrats are planning to do to regulate banks represents a "permanent bailout," through the establishment of a fund to deal with faltering banks. Others have charged that the Chris Dodd-led Democrat plan amounts to the Fannie-and-Freddie-ization of Wall Street, through a narrowed focus of the Federal Reserve and explicit and implicit guarantees. Indeed, Kansas City Fed president Thomas Hoenig wrote in the New York Times this weekend that the bill "deliberately narrows the central bank's focus to Wall Street alone."

The problem that both parties are wrestling with is the concept of "too big to fail." It might not be a big problem for the country if a small number of local banks go bankrupt but if that happened to, say, Bank of America, it would create a problem that simply cried out for government intervention. And the plausible political alternative to the Democrats' financial regulations, regrettably, does not seem to be less government intervention.

Democrats have charged that America's recent recession stemmed from Wall Street "greed" and Republican "deregulation." Several stubborn facts suggest this is a distorted picture of what happened. Banks have been somewhat freed up to compete with other financial institutions but most of their deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and they are still heavily regulated by the federal government. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, activists making use of the Community Reinvestment Act, and Fannie and Freddie all encouraged banks to issue subprime loans, and the Bush administration went so far as to actively discourage banks from requiring significant down payments.

Of course, not all government regulations are created equal, and Republicans, some Fed governors, and not a few public choice economists argue that an orderly bank breakup would be the least bad option. It's only a slight exaggeration to say they would get around "too big to fail" by eliminating big banking altogether. □

Haiti doesn't need foreign-aid money. It needs a better development strategy.

By Tate Watkins

Arlington, Va. – Michelle Obama visited Haiti last week and told Haitians still digging out of devastation that "the world stands with you." True, as the US military plans to end its disaster relief mission in Haiti at the beginning of June, the world will watch as Haiti transitions from emergency relief to reconstruction. But the country's future hinges on the development strategy the international community chooses. At the recent United Nations fundraising conference for Haiti, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke of a "sweeping exercise in nation-building on a scale and scope not seen in generations." Donors pledged more than \$5 billion for Haitian reconstruction efforts in coming years. The worldwide sentiment to help Haiti should be lauded, but the international community's aid-based development strategy should not.

Haiti clearly faces immediate financial needs, but donors must realize that an approach that has failed for decades will continue to yield the same results. The international community's aid strategy has not led to sustained economic growth in Haiti, or any other country. Aside from marginal growth last year, Haiti's economy remained stagnant despite tens of billions of aid dollars during the past half century.

Countries worldwide have spent more than \$2 trillion in aid over the past half century, and an estimated 3 billion people still live on less than \$2.50 a day. A new approach is needed, one that supports the private sector and entrepreneurs, and empowers developing countries like Haiti. Unfortunately, the consensus still favors increasing aid funding, despite recent drastic improvements in standards of living typically attributed to gains from trade.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton acknowledges that the new aid plan cannot rely on previous "failed strategies" and must be sustainable in order to wean Haiti off of its dependence on aid. But unfortunately, Secretary Clinton mistakenly supports the idea that all Haiti needs is better planning and more foreign aid.

The problem with this idea is that systematic foreign aid creates opportunities for corruption, cultures of dependency, and disincentives to develop. The aid faucet misaligns incentives between donors and recipients, making it extremely difficult to turn off the flow. For example, Zambian economist Dambisa Moyo often cites cases of government officials spending aid on private jets and shopping trips on the Champs-Élysées.

Similarly, in Haiti, the Duvalier dynasty stole millions in aid funds from 1957 to 1986. Government leaders stand to gain more by

perpetually receiving donations from rich countries, rather than developing a healthy economy and ultimately ending funding. Aid distorts political institutions because country leaders do not have to rely on taxpayers to provide funds, so there's no incentive to respond to citizens' needs and requests. No taxation; no representation.

The developed world can and should promote growth by eliminating agricultural subsidies and tariffs so that poor farmers can exploit advantages in farming. Bill Clinton and George W. Bush have taken the first, small steps to do that by advocating relaxed trade restrictions on Haitian goods. The international community must heed these recommendations.

Foreign investment – not international donations – is a worthy development strategy that aligns long-term incentives between lenders and borrowers. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank should encourage sovereign countries to seek financing on international markets rather than provide grants and loans below market terms.

These reforms foster opportunities for local entrepreneurs to increase exports and meet local needs, which ultimately lead to economic and humanitarian improvement.

For years aid recipients have agreed that aid does not lead to growth and prosperity. Five years ago, Kenyan economist James Shikwati pleaded to aid planners, "For God's sake, please just stop." And nearly a decade ago, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade acknowledged, "I've never seen a country develop itself through aid or credit."

More recently, Ms. Moyo argued for a gradual end of systematic aid claiming, "there is no country – anywhere in the world – that has meaningfully reduced poverty and spurred significant and sustainable levels of economic growth by relying on aid."

Using international funding to meet Haiti's short-term needs is one thing, but a forward-looking plan to reconstruct the nation – and properly construct much of it for the first time – is an entirely different one. Experts from rich Western countries craft "official development assistance" plans that sound promising in theory but have not worked in practice. There is no evidence that the newest round of donor spending and economic planning for Haiti will be any more effective than previous efforts.

Alternatives to foreign aid give developing countries long-term incentives to prosper and can unshackle local inventors, entrepreneurs, and innovators. These strategies – not foreign aid – will effect lasting positive economic and humanitarian change for Haitians. □

Oficialistas continúan acosando a diputados en Nicaragua

MANAGUA (AP) - Los grupos oficialistas que asedian a legisladores de la oposición protagonizaron disturbios el miércoles con agresiones a la prensa.

El periodista del canal 12 de televisión David McField dijo telefónicamente a AP que simpatizantes sandinistas atacaron a pedradas y averiaron el auto de su colega David Rivera. No hubo víctimas, pero sí daños materiales.

Agregó que los manifestantes que se movilizan a pie y en motocicletas lo amenazaron de muerte cuando cubría los incidentes.

Un fotógrafo de AP observó que sujetos que cubren sus rostros con pañuelos incendiaron un auto de propiedad desconocida aparcado en las cercanías del las oficinas del ex candidato presidencial liberal, Eduardo Montealegre, donde se reunían diputados de ese partido.

Luciano García informó más tarde que las turbas incendiaron su camioneta y condenó "la actitud expectante de la policía ante los hechos". En una trifulca ocurrida en el mismo sitio resultó herido de una pedrada en la frente el periodista, Nelson Hurtado, del oficialista Canal 4, quien mientras era atendido por paramédicos culpó a los opositores de la agresión sufrida. Montealegre dijo que los diputados liberales "se sentían secuestrados víctimas de terrorismo de estado".

Atribuyó los ataques al temor del presidente Daniel Ortega a que la oposición se reúna el jueves en el legislativo para derogar decretos presidenciales que favorecen su reelección.

Las organizaciones gremiales



Seguidores del gobernante Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional sujetan piedras durante una protesta en Managua el miércoles 21 de abril de 2010. (AP Foto/Esteban Felix)

de la empresa privada nicaragüense y organismos de derechos humanos condenaron el miércoles el ataque de la víspera con pedradas y petardos contra un hotel donde sesionaban diputados opositores al gobierno del presidente Daniel Ortega.

Los diputados sesionaban en el hotel para tratar de derogar un decreto de Ortega que prorroga el período en sus funciones a dos magistrados sandinistas a los que se les venció el período, pero cuyos sustitutos no han sido elegidos por el Congreso por falta de acuerdo entre las bancadas.

Los legisladores sesionaron en el hotel capitalino porque los seguidores del gobierno, dirigidos por el vicepresidente de la Corte Suprema de Justicia, Rafael Solís, habían bloqueado el edificio de la Asamblea nacional.

El diario La Prensa informó que recibió un supuesto

comunicado de militares retirados y ex combatientes históricos sandinistas en los que reconocen su participación en las violentas protestas acaecidas en el país durante los últimos dos días y exige a la oposición a que reconozca la legitimidad del decreto de Ortega.

Según el diario, el grupo admite que ha participado en el bloqueo al edificio de la Asamblea Nacional, los ataques contra un hotel y

otras acciones de violencia y asegura que mantendrá ese tipo de acciones.

Los diputados liberales, Carlos Gadea y Maximino García, pidieron a la Comisión Permanente de Derechos Humanos (Cpdh) y al Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos (Cnidh), que denuncien los hechos ante la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (Cid) y que solicite a la Policía "medidas cautelares" para los

diputados opositores.

La Cámara de Comercio Americana de Nicaragua dijo el miércoles en un comunicado que fue un ataque de "violencia gansteril oficialista... un atentado contra la empresa privada".

El arzobispo de Managua, monseñor Leopoldo Brenes, dijo que Ortega "como primer ciudadano de la Nación tiene responsabilidad... pero de una u otra forma todos estamos involucrados".

"La guerra nunca ha solucionado problemas", dijo y recomendó el dialogo. Las acciones sandinistas ocurren en momentos en que opositores liberales se oponen a la inminente reelección de Ortega, mediante interpretaciones de la Constitución, hechas por magistrados sandinistas en la Corte Suprema de Justicia. Montealegre también responsabilizó de los hechos a Ortega y aseguró que la oposición cuenta ya con 48 votos para anular su reelección. El gerente del hotel, José Solórzano dijo que el hotel sufrió daños en sus ventanas de cristal por 20.000 dólares además de que sus huéspedes huyeron.

En Puerto Rico

Agentes de la DEA decomisan tres millones de dólares

SAN JUAN (AP) - Agentes federales decomisaron casi tres millones de dólares en efectivo en el aeropuerto principal de Puerto Rico y en un condominio de un distrito turístico de San Juan, dijo el miércoles un funcionario del Departamento Estadounidense Antidrogas (DEA) de Estados Unidos.

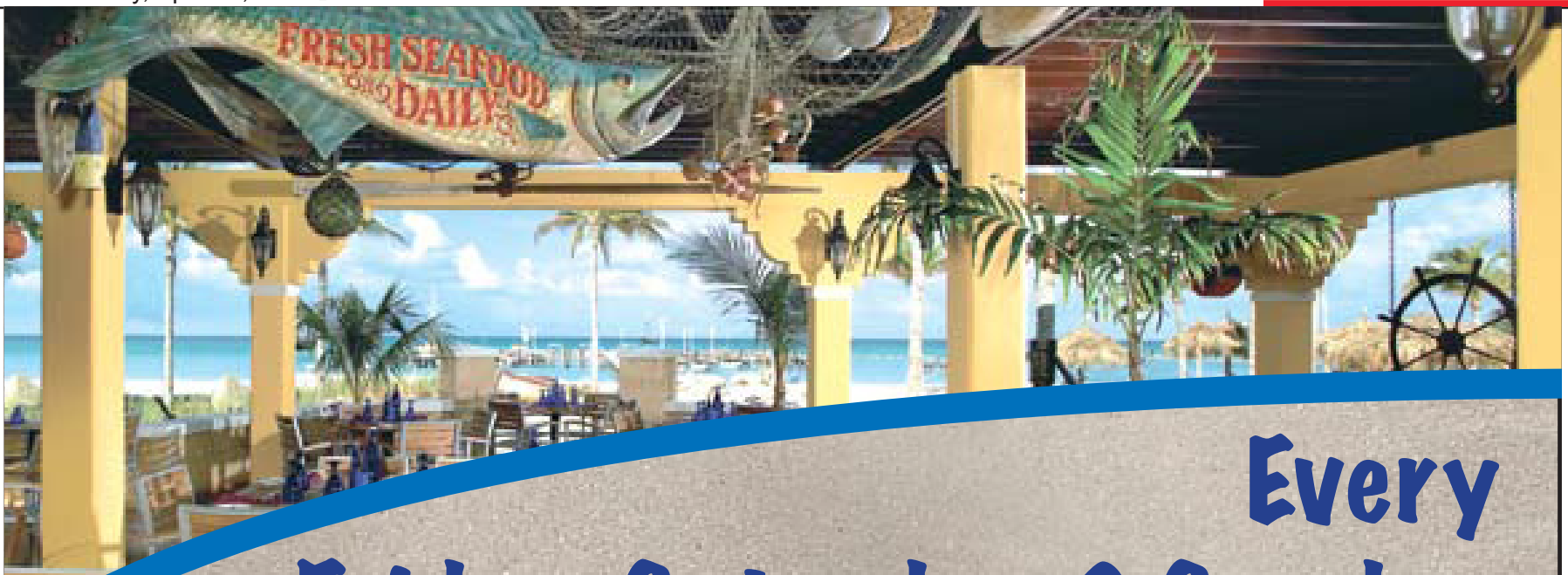
El dinero fue incautado durante el fin de semana por agentes de la DEA, que encontraron la mayor parte dentro de maletas en el condominio del barrio Isla Verde, dijo Javier Peña, agente especial a cargo de la división de la agencia en el Caribe.

Un venezolano de 53 años que fue seguido

en su traslado del apartamento al aeropuerto fue detenido con 375.000 dólares en efectivo en maletas. El hombre dijo a los agentes que el dinero no le pertenecía y que se lo entregó en el apartamento una persona desconocida, informó un comunicado de prensa de la DEA.

La operación fue parte de una investigación en curso a una banda internacional de narcotráfico en el Caribe, afirmó Waldo Santiago, vocero de la DEA, quien agregó que no podía proporcionar más detalles. Puerto Rico es un punto propicio de tránsito de cocaína sudamericana hacia Estados Unidos.





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